

THE
POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE LATE LEARNED AND REVEREND

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

VOL II.

THE

POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE LATE EDWARD AND KEITH



ISAAC WILSON

VOL. II

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THE
POSTHUMOUS WORKS
OF THE LATE LEARNED AND REVEREND
ISAAC WATTS, D.D.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

COMPILED FROM PAPERS IN POSSESSION
OF HIS IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS:

ADJUSTED AND PUBLISHED

BY A GENTLEMAN
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, ADELPHI, STRAND;
AND J. BEW, PATER-NOSTER ROW.

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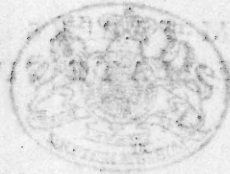
POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE LATE LEARNED AND REVEREND

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES

CONTAINED FROM THE
OF HIS VENERABLE SUCCESSOR



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BY A. GENTILEMAN

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. BENTLEY, ABINGDON STREET

AND J. BATHURST, NEW

SPRING

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and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and*

he

*he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.
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L E T T E R S.

From the Bishop of LONDON to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

GOOD SIR,

Whitehall, April 30, 1731.

I WAS solicitous to know the writer of a book which came to me with an anonymous letter, because I was very much pleased with the performance. The reasonings are clear and strong; and the manner of writing, serious and truly christian. You judge very right of what I mean by the insufficiency of reason to be a guide in religion; and it is strange, how the person who has written against my Second Letter, should understand me in any other sense, when he knew I was writing against those who assert *such* a sufficiency of reason as renders revelation *needless*; and when I had guarded against all misconstructions, by distinguishing between reason in a state of innocence and in a state of corruption; and took the estimate of what it *can* do, from what in fact it *has* done.

Since you are resolved that the author of the *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason* shall continue unknown, I will punctually comply with

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B

your

your direction in that particular, till you shall think fit to discharge me from the obligation you have laid me under. But, in my own private judgment, I cannot think the reasons you mention for your continuing unknown, of weight enough to hinder the doing justice to yourself. I am, Sir, your assured friend and servant,

EDM. LONDON.

L E T T E R II.

GOOD SIR,

Fulham, July 14, 1734.

I Return you my hearty thanks for your late valuable present, which has given me both pleasure and profit; and I am satisfied it will give the same to every honest mind that attends to it. Only, I am somewhat afraid, that the first part to Sect. 14. though laid out with great exactness, yet, being also abstracted and philosophical, may discourage persons, who are not accustomed to close thinking, from going on to that part which more immediately relates to practice, and which throughout is very plain and edifying.

You will pardon the freedom I take, and believe me to be, with great truth and respect, Sir, your very faithful friend and servant,

EDM. LONDON.

L E T.

L E T T E R III.

GOOD SIR,

Fulham, Aug. 21, 1739.

I Received the favour of your letter, and am glad to find that you think the cautions which I have given against lukewarmness, may, by the blessing of God, be of some service to religion. There is, without doubt, great need to awaken people out of that unhappy state; and the labouring to do it, is what may truly be called the chief part of the ministerial office. But though we may hope that there are few who wholly neglect the work, we must never expect that it will be done by all with equal zeal and life. When you speak of the way of preaching among the Dissenters, you will not expect it from me to believe, that all the preachers do it with the same force and energy that Dr. Watts has done, and still does, and I pray God he may long continue to do.

After I had given directions to my clergy, and put them into the hands of every particular incumbent, I think I could say no less, than that I *hoped* they were not unmindful of them, unless I knew the contrary.

It is a great misfortune to the Church of England, that in market towns, where there is the greatest need of able ministers, there is usually the

meanest provision for them; which gives great advantage to the preachers of other denominations, and may, in some places, be the occasion of particular people chusing to resort to them, rather than to the church. This may sometimes happen either through the want of vigour and earnestness in the delivery, or through an unhappiness of voice, and sometimes by not preaching so frequently upon points purely christian as the person could wish; cases to be much lamented when they do happen, but not to be prevented or wholly remedied by the utmost care and endeavour that a bishop can use, unless he had the appointment of them.

It had been happy for Mr. Whitfield, if he had taken the wise advice and cautions you gave him. But, from the time that men imagine themselves to be singled out by God for extraordinary purposes, and in consequence of that to be guided by extraordinary impulses and operations, all human advice is lost upon them. However, as God knows how to bring good out of evil, I will hope that these extravagancies of theirs may be the occasion of some good in the event, if they do not get too much head. I am, with great affection and esteem, Sir, your very faithful servant,

EDM. LONDON.

L E T.

L E T T E R IV.

GOOD SIR,

Whitehall, Nov. 29, 1745.

I AM obliged to you for your favourable acceptance of my Pastoral Letter. The two things that may be fairly pleaded in its favour are, that it was seasonable and well meant.

If it please God to deliver us once more from the terrible judgment of popery, there will be a necessity of reviewing the laws against it, and removing all appearances of rigour, beyond what is apparently necessary to our own future preservation. And when that is done, I think it may be very right to enjoin the *publication* of them in the way you mention. At the same time, it will be highly fit to oblige papists to renounce all such principles as are destructive of civil society, and of the government under which they live.

I heartily wish you a better state of health; and, considering the great good you are doing out of the pulpit, you may very well excuse yourself from going into it, under a decay of strength, and with evident prejudice to your health. I am, with great truth, Sir, your faithful friend and servant,

EDM. LONDON.

From Mr. BENJAMIN COLMAN to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

Boston, Feb. 12, 1735-6.

IN one of your last to me, you express yourself as greatly pleased with the account I gave you of the great and good disposition found in a tribe of Indians on our south-western borders, at Hantatonock, to receive the gospel. I send you by this ship, and to Dr. Harris, Dr. Guise, Mr. Neal, and others, the sermon preached at Mr. Sargent's ordination, to which is some account of this work of God prefixed, and therein two letters to me, to which I refer you. Since which I have a third letter, in which Mr. Sargent expresses himself thus to me :

“ SIR, I doubt not but God in his infinite mercy hears the prayers of good men, daily put up to him for success in the cause of Christ, in which I have the honour to be engaged. In their favour, next to the blessing of God on my endeavour, I seem to enjoy the pleasures of society in the deepest solitude.

“ I wish I were worthy the love of so excellent a man as the Rev. Dr. Watts, whom all the world
admire

admire and love. And if I may be thought to deserve in any measure the good opinion of the world, it is not a little, owing to the Doctor's ingenious writings; which have the force to charm minds to the love of piety and virtue, and infuse something of his own spirit into his readers.

“ I have always endeavoured to lead our Indians, by the easiest steps, into knowledge. I had no thoughts of my first discourse to them, that it would be ever read by any but myself; but had I tried to mend it, it may be I should have made it worse.

“ God pleases to crown our endeavours with unexpected and surprising success. I have baptized almost forty persons, infants and adults. I hope the adult have a pretty good understanding of the main and fundamental doctrines of the holy religion into which they have been baptized. I always endeavour to possess their minds with a most serious sense of what they are about, when they enter themselves the disciples of Christ. Their whole hearts seem to be engaged in the matter; and I have reason to think, that the imperfection of their knowledge is made up by the zeal and integrity of their intentions. Those that have been baptized, have behaved themselves very well, though they have several times been tempted to exceed the rules of temperance with the offers of

strong drink, which used to be their *beloved destruction*. They seem to be *surprised with the change* they find in themselves ; and, after *their manner*, express the difference between their former and present state, by *infancy* and *mankood*, *dreaming* and being *awake*, *darkness* and *light*, and the like metaphors. I pray God that the *day-star*, that seems risen in their hearts, may shine more and more to the perfect day. I have two Indian lads live with me, and have 3 *l.* in money, which I design to spend on them, (i. e. by subsisting them) and by their assistance to get the language. Pray for me, and for our new profelytes, and the whole tribe, and may the blessing of the charitable descend on you, &c.

December 26, 1735.

JOHN SARGENT."

Mr. Sargent had not been ordained four months when he wrote this letter. I have sent him some of Mr. Holden's money for his subsisting the Indian lads, ten pounds ; and he shall have more if he needs. His work and prayers are a good return. You see, Sir, how you are loved up in our woods, and what excellent men live there, and what good things are doing there. As it rejoiced Mr. Sargent there to hear of your joy in them, so it will refresh you, Sir, in the midst of London, to hear from him,

My

My packet now comes to Mr. Coram at the Navy Office ; he will safely, and without charge, convey it to you. He is one of the trustees for Georgia, and has brought me into some correspondence with the Earl of Egmont, and the Rev. Mr. Smith of Aldgate ; and now also with the Rev. Mr. Winder of Liverpool, who by his letter appears to me to be a very superior person. Mr. Coram has a vast zeal for our missionaries in the East, on Dr. Williams's foundation. But the prospect is poor there. If it continue so unprofitable, and the door opens above Honstatonock, as seems likely, I tell our *Governour* we must needs remove those missionaries thither.

And now I have named his *Excellency*, I will add, that he never has said any thing of your leaving your poem to him out of your *Miscellaneous Thoughts*. I am sorry you thought there was reason to do it. If I am able to judge, he is an upright and fervent man to do good. He is the father of the Honstatonocks, and tender of Mr Sargent as of his eye. His heart is much with God and for him. I will take leave to communicate to you some lines he has lately wrote to me, that I may restore him in your thoughts if need be.

January, 1735-6.

“ GREAT are my desires to serve my Creator and Redeemer in my public and private life,
Dear

Dear Sir, I entreat, I charge and require you to wrestle with God, that I may be always faithful and upright before him."

February 7, —.

"AS the recess of the General Assembly and the winter season gives me some little ease, I cannot employ myself better to my satisfaction than to enquire into the duty I owe to my God and Saviour. These are admirably set before me in your letters, &c. But, O Sir, in what a glaring light has God set me! How has he encompassed me with innumerable blessings, health, affluence, honour, &c.! And now to be taken from the sheepfolds, &c. How grateful, vigilant, and prostrate ought I to lie at his feet, on whose shoulders the government is laid; that in the whole of my administration I may advance his glory! wherein I am sure I shall best of all honour the king and serve this people, &c. &c."

I thought, Sir, there could be no like effectual way, to shew you the true worth and spirit of our excellent Governour, than by such a transcript, which I send you in a confidence of secrecy, that can only excuse, if it may at all justify, what I do. And after all, my heart smites me, as David's did him, when he cut off the skirt and saved his father's life.

The

The spring is now coming, and the ships from sea appear then as the birds out of the woods. Then we look out to see and read you again, to receive new bounties and blessings. But good and bad is mixed in this life, and we seldom hear from our living friends, but we hear of some dead. May you still live, by the will of God, and love and pray for your affectionate,

BENJ. COLMAN.

P. S. We have had a strange fever that seizes the throats of our children, in New Hampshire, this winter, and carries them off suddenly; sweeps houses; so that from week to week we hear of three buried together by one, and three by another; some have buried their all, and some their five or six. It is new, and no means safe as yet; our eyes are up to God, and have kept a day of prayer through the province to make intercession. "Spare thy people, O Lord!"

L E T T E R II.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Boston, Decem. 17, 1736.

YOUR favours of September last, found me confined to my chamber, under the asthmatic oppressions of a very great cold and cough, which
has

has been very heavy upon me by night, but by day I have had more ease. I have not been out of my doors these thirty days, but only to preach, and am much enfeebled and wasted; but, I thank God, this last week I am something amended. My tender constitution from my youth, feels the advances of age sooner and stronger than many others; yet I have seen others, seemingly stronger, breaking sooner in all their powers; and what am I that I should be spared? The Lord quicken me in my work, and prepare me for my change.

Your picture for the college, and the books for Mr. Sargent, came safe to me, and I have given the good captain a receipt for them, in acknowledgment of his care. I have wrote to Mr. President and Mr. Sargent, and given them an account of your kindness, and the words you have written respecting both. But there is such a wilderness between us and Mr. Sargent, that I fear whether the books will get to him till the spring; and Mr. President has not yet got a safe hand to send for your picture, which will be very welcome to the college, as I am sure your soul in its various forms have been.

I something wonder that my packets last year were so long in their way to you; but Mr. Coram lets me know from Bristol, that he had been long from home, which accounts in part to me for the reason.

Although

Although the difference that has been at Springfield and Boston, has wounded and weakened the hearts of some of us there and here, yet, thanks be to God, the good fruits of the spirit there abide ; and I send you an extract of a long letter, and another to Dr. Guise from the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Northampton, relating to that work, which will gratify both you and him in the general account given ; and you may make what use of it you please for the good of others. The whole of his letter to me is eight sheets in writing, and whether it will be best to print it all, I am in doubt, considering the taste of the present day ; yet I find Mr. Edwards is not altogether pleased with the liberty we have taken of so general an extract. If it be not *printed* here in the whole, as a proposal is made by the bookseller, I think to send over to Dr. Guise and you the *manuscript*, with Mr. Edwards's leave, and I think nothing less was his meaning in his labour of writing it ; and then it will be yours, to use it as you may judge best for the service of souls.

I suppose you have my sermon on the Rev. Mr. Stoddard's decease, who was an eminent father in our churches ; and it will please you to see the piety, labours, and success of his grandson and successor, who is risen up as Elisha in the spirit of Elias, to do greater things, through the special grace of God in him and with him.

The

The Rev. Mr. Williams, to whose pious and plain sermons the letter aforesaid is an appendix, is now seventy years old, and has been the father of that country since Mr. Stoddard's decease; a man eminent for meekness of wisdom, apostolic love and charity, devotion, public and private, admirable in the flow of his prayers, and the humblest saint in the whole province. God has blessed him with four sons; one president of Yale College, two superior in the ministry among us, the youngest one of our court. Our visit last year to Springfield was a great wound to his soul.

I heard lately from Mr. Sargent, that his Indians grow uneasy about townships laid out about them, to his great discouragement. Not able to wait on the Governour, I wrote to him, and he laid my letter before the court; and he satisfies me, in a line, that the court will take effectual care to make the tribe easy. The Dutch traders do all they can to infuse jealousies into the Indians of our design to make a property of them, but as yet in vain.

The state of our province is greatly embarrassed about the paper currency. The court called us to a day of prayer with them in the council chamber; we kept it with much appearance of the presence of God with my brethren in their prayers. I preached from Zech. vii. 8, 9. and the court
ordered

ordered the printing it. The Governour sent me, for my subject, Hosea x. 12. so I made it my application. We are at our wit's end, and yet had we honour and honesty, and humility enough; with, indeed, righteousness and compassion to our selves mutually, our way is plain; to cashier our finery, pride and vanity, and live within ourselves; and one fifty years good and just management would bring back the silver which the last fifty years extravagance has sent away to you; to whom we ought to pay our debts, and live on the rest.

Captain Coram's letter is not yet come to me; I am glad you answered him as you did. The Commissioners have seen good (Dr. Sewal and I dissenting) to dismiss Messrs. Succomb and Parker from their stations, in March next, without any certainty of another door opening for them. This troubles me; but the Governour and all the gentlemen voted it after a long debate; so unprofitable has their present station and labours proved. I doubt whether it will not appear *sudden* to the honourable society at Edinburgh.

As to Mr. Mason and his Indian, who I hear is dead; his visit to London did not at all please the Governour and Commissioners here, and so we told him by a vote before he went. I am sorry I did not give you an account of his
 2 voyage.

voyage. When he told the Commissioners of it, who had employed him seven years before as school-master to the Mohrags, near New London, I said to him at the board, that the first thought occurring to me upon his motion was, that it might affect the civil liberties of the colony of Connecticut. I hinted this to the Rev. Mr. Adams, pastor of the church in New London, and he sent my hint to the government there; which immediately alarmed them, brought me their thanks, and their application to the Commissioners, with papers and deeds; whereby it plainly appeared to us, that under the pretence of the government injuring the Indians in their lands, Mr. Mason was invading them for himself, by an old deed given in times of distress, by their ancestor Uncas, to Mr. Mason's grandfather, to secure them at that threatening juncture; which obligation the Indians thought, from their father's account to them, had at the time been cancelled and burnt. However, the government have no doubt instructed their agent on this point, and as Mr. Mason had only asked of me a letter to Mr Holden, I let him know I should write in his disfavour, and so I did; and Mr. Holden in his last told me he had heard nothing of him. The Commissioners here, I suppose, will not employ him again if he returns; and I see nothing but distraction and confusion

confusion to himself and family, in his present voyage; and I could not wish him *God-speed*..

You are pleased to say, Sir, "Alas! that the Hollis's are all dead," and then name two yet alive, with your prayers "that the good spirit of their ancestors might rest upon them." I am glad I can now inform you that your prayer is answered in Mr. Isaac Hollis, on whom I have drawn, in the last ships, by his order, for sixty pounds sterling, for the instruction, clothing, and lodging of twelve Indian boys at Honstatonock, and from year to year he promises the continuance of that support; for which God lengthen out his life, heart, and ability: may it be his blessed will. The merchants here have his name and bills now, so that it can no longer be a secret. Five or six years ago I refused, to his displeasure, a settlement of twenty pounds sterling per annum for a fourth missionary to the East; but I told him I must be equally for him, if he held me wise and faithful, and pointed him to other services which he regarded not; but now I think all his pious intention answered under Mr. Sargent, and he has proceeded as you now hear.

I had your *Redeemer and Sanctifier* before, and have given what you now sent to my colleague Mr. Cooper; but there are two things you have printed I have not, but have read, and made an

abstract of one because I owned it not, which is the Human Will.

My respects to Mr. Raffey. Entreat Dr. Guise, who has not wrote to me, to accept of what I here write as to himself.

Our Governour has lately buried the wife of his youth with great magnificence; her funeral sermon will be out this week, by Mr. Prince, and no doubt will come to you: he has behaved on the occasion, in privacy and openly, with a most christian temper, and been openly insulted for it by some hidden, but I hope impotent malice. He has always immediately been acquainted with all you send to him for others, and takes great pleasure in any office from Dr. Guise: his nephew here is married, tell him, and set up his trade in Boston, and I hope does well, and two days ago I called to see if he had any letter from his uncle. I am glad to hear that the *Compassionate Address to the Christian World* is Mr. J. Reynold's, an admirable man, and soon ripe for heaven; we reprinted it here, and knew not whence it was.

The glass of your picture is not broken, and just now Mr. Appleton came in and has taken it with him to Cambridge; he thanks you for the respectful mention you make of his sermon. We have a new church building in Boston, many of my hearers go off to it: one Mr. Hooper from Edinburgh, an admirable preacher, is like to be
settled

settled there, but he has brought no certificates; he came over to be a tutor to a young gentleman.

This comes by Mr. J. Royston, eldest son of Dr. Royston, who tells me he has heretofore waited on you; I pray God to prosper and bless him.

God has pleased to put me again into mourning; my dear grandson, the only branch of my beloved Fural, is in the grave with his mother. A dark and pleasant tomb, where my midnight thoughts too often are. It has helped to bring me downward; God give me the consolation to see them in heaven. Pray for my only surviving daughter; she has a poetical turn too, I wish only it were as magnetically turned on heaven, as her sister's was, I am in hopes of it, for she is truly virtuous. Forgive a father to a friend if on a sudden he doze a little. Your loving brother,

BENJ. COLMAN.

From Dr. DODDRIDGE to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REV. SIR,

Harborough, Nov. 8, 1729.

THE great regard I have for your judgment, and my confidence in your generous and most obliging friendship, engages me to beg the favour of your advice in a very important affair with which I am exceedingly embarrassed.

I have now before me an unanimous and most pressing invitation to Northampton, accompanied with all the circumstances of seriousness, zeal, and affection, which is possible for a plain honest people to express. You know, Sir, that it is a very large congregation, and though their sentiments be much narrower than I could wish, which alarms some of my wisest friends in these parts, yet I am ready to hope I might have a comfortable settlement amongst them, and a fair prospect of considerable usefulness, with the blessing of God, attending my labours. They are, indeed, a people of a very low taste, as any I ever met with, which is a circumstance I own disagreeable to me, but which, if it were the only objection, might well give way to the solemn arguments on the contrary side.

But the greatest difficulty of all is, that which relates to my scheme for academical education.

I have

I have been preparing for the business of a tutor several years, I am now entered upon it, and find it a delight rather than a fatigue. On the whole I have reason to believe, and it is the judgment of Mr. Some, Mr. Saunders, and several of my other friends in these parts, that my designs for education are as likely to succeed as any others which I can form for the service of the church, since my intimate acquaintance with Mr. Jennings's method may give me advantages above others who are vastly my superiours in genius and learning. Besides that, I am under such obligations to my pupils and their friends, as would make it highly indecent for me to lay aside the business till their course be dispatched.

The people at Northampton do indeed freely offer to admit of my going on with this employment amongst them. But, allowing it were possible to do something that way, it is apparent that many great advantages must be resigned which I am very loth to quit. The prudence of Mrs. Jennings and her generous friendship, which makes this family far more agreeable to my pupils than any other which I could offer them in exchange. The temper of the dissenters in these parts, which chearfully allows innocent freedoms, which such young students should not be denied. The great leisure I have for study, while all the care of the people lies on Mr. Some, and the countenance which his name

gives to my scheme, besides the much greater and more important advantage I receive from his most intimate friendship and daily conversation. While I am here I consider myself as still in a course of education, and hope, if God spare my life to the end of these four years, to have made some considerable improvements in my academical scheme, and to be in many other respects abundantly fitter for public service than I now am. If I go to Northampton, I may indeed spare a few hours every day to read and explain Mr. Jennings's Lectures to one class at a time; but I shall have very little opportunity of increasing my own stock, which is yet but very small. I can never expect a flourishing Academy for provisions are very dear there, and many other circumstances make it an inconvenient situation for young students; and at present my engaging in such a variety of business might, perhaps, shock my constitution, and much more probably expose me to the censure of the world, as guilty of inexcusable rashness and arrogance. Mr. Some and Mr. Saunders do not think it prudent to oppose my going, but I am confident they would neither of them be thoroughly pleased with it. I was very unwilling to determine the affair absolutely, till I had consulted with you. I beg your speedy answer, and desire that you would please to communicate this to Dr. Hunt, Mr. Neal, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Jolly, Mr.

Mr. Auther, and any other friend whom you may think proper. I have just been writing to Dr. Wright about it, and should be glad if you had an opportunity of talking over the business with him. I beg a particular remembrance in your prayers, and humbly hope that God will direct me to what will be most for his glory, and the good of his church, to the service of which I have devoted my life, and all my little capacities and opportunities of usefulness. I cannot conclude without returning my hearty acknowledgments to good Dr. Watts for his many favours. I assure you, Sir, that I have the most tender and respectful sense of them, and shall rejoice in every opportunity of cultivating a farther friendship with you, as one of the greatest honours and pleasures of my life. I am, reverend Sir, your most obliged humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

L E T T E R II.

REV. SIR,

Harborough, Nov. 22, 1729.

I HOPE you will pardon the liberty I take of reminding you of a letter I wrote to you a fortnight ago, to beg the favour of your advice in the present circumstance of my affairs. I would by no means urge you to any thing which would be an incon-

venience to you, but as it is high time the business should be determined, and many ill consequences may follow on keeping it longer in suspense, I expect your answer with some impatience. I fear, least in this sickly season, some illness should have prevented your writing. I heartily pray for the continuance of that life and health which is so important to the church and the world; and am, with much greater respect than I can express, reverend Sir, your most obliged and affectionate servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S. Mr. Joseph Saunders (brother to Mr. J. Saunders of Kettering) and one of my pupils, is a man of so good a genius and so excellent a character, that I conceive very delightful hopes with regard to him. His circumstances are narrow, and those of his excellent brother are at present much perplexed. His coming to me has prevented his having an exhibition from either of the funds, which makes me the more solicitous to do him what service I can, by recommending him to my friends. If it lies in your way, Sir, to give any assistance towards his education I should take it as a particular favour, and I hope you would have a great deal of reason to be thoroughly satisfied in having chosen a very worthy object of regard.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

REVEREND SIR,

May, 1731.

I VERY willingly comply with the request of my good friend, Mr. Hawtyn, in writing to you by him, as it gives me an opportunity of introducing to your knowledge a person very much esteemed by us in these parts, on account of his genius, learning, piety, and conduct, and at the same time of paying my respects to Dr. Watts. With what sincere reverence and affection I do it, I hope, Sir, I need not tell you at large. I cannot but think that whenever I have been so happy as to see and converse with you, my countenance must have discovered the inward pleasure that was diffusing itself over my mind on such an occasion. I am deeply sensible of the favour which you have done me, in joining with some other friends in recommending me as a tutor at your board. If I do not impose upon myself, my conscience witnesses for me in the sight of God, that the hopes of usefulness, rather than the prospects of any worldly advantages, have engaged me to undertake the work. And I persuade myself that your prayers are sometimes concurring with mine, that the great Author of knowledge and of grace may impart to me all that furniture of both kinds which

which such a station requires, and may succeed my attempts for the edification of his church and the glory of our common Lord. Till heaven is enriched by your removal thither, I hope, Sir, to find in you a counsellor and a friend, if God should continue my life ; and I cannot but admire the goodness of Providence in honouring me with the friendship of such a person. I can truly say, your name was in the number of those which were dearest to me, long before I ever saw you. Yet since I have known you, I cannot but find something of a more tender pleasure in the thought of your successful various services in the advancement of the best of causes, that of real, vital, practical christianity. What happened under my observation a few days ago, gave me joy with regard to you, which is yet so warm in my mind that I hope, Sir, you will pardon my relating the occasion of it. On Wednesday last, I was preaching in a barn, to a pretty large assembly of plain country people, at a village a few miles off. After a sermon from Heb. vi. 12. we sung one of your Hymns, (which, if I remember right, was the cxi. of the 2d Book) and in that part of the worship I had the satisfaction to observe tears in the eyes of several of the auditory, and after the service was over, some of them told me, that they were not able to sing, so deeply were their minds affected

affected with it; and the clerk, in particular, told me he could hardly utter the words of it. These were most of them poor people who work for their living. On the mention of your name, I found they had read several of your books with great delight, and that your Hymns and Psalms were almost their daily entertainment. And when one of the company said, "What if Dr. Watts should come down to Northampton?" another replied with a remarkable warmth, "The very sight of him would be like an ordinance to me." I mention the thing just as it was, and am persuaded it is but a familiar natural specimen of what often occurs amongst a multitude of christians, who never saw your face. Nor do I, by any means, intend it as a compliment to a genius capable of entertaining by the same compositions, the greatest and the meanest of mankind, but to remind you, dear Sir, (with all the deference and humility due to a superior character) how much you owe to him who has honoured you as the instrument of such extensive service. Had Providence cast my lot near you, I should joyfully have embraced the most frequent opportunities of improving my understanding and warming my heart by conversing with you, which would surely have been greatly for my advantage as a tutor, a minister, and a christian. As it is, I will omit none which
may

may fall in my way ; and when I regret it that I can enjoy no more of you here, will comfort myself with the thoughts of that blessed state where I hope for ever to dwell with you, and to join with you in sweeter and sublimer songs than you have taught the church below. It is my desire and my expectation, that these and your other writings may be transmitted to the remotest generations, and that thousands yet unborn may have eternal reason to be thankful for them. And it is, I hope, a desire animated by a higher principle than that sincere affection, gratitude, and respect with which I am, dear and honoured Sir, your most obliged humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S. My most humble service attends Lady Abney, and her most agreeable family, with Mr. Price, Mr. Neal, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Auther, &c.

L E T T E R IV.

REV. SIR,

Olney, Feb. 23, 1732-3.

AS you have already been informed of some circumstances relating to the dissenting interest here at Olney, and were so good as to appear ready to espouse the cause of your friends here, we think it proper to address ourselves to you, with this account

count of the present state of things amongst them, which we desire you would please to communicate to the board, with our most humble service to the gentlemen there.

We suppose it is not unknown to many of them that most of the dissenters in this town, have for some time been extremely fond of lay preachers in the Antimonian strain, and have entertained very strong prejudices against all the regular ministers in these parts: nevertheless, there are a few amongst them, who are persons of great candour and good sense, as well as eminent piety; these have invited us over to preach a lecture here once a month, and we have each of us taken our turns according to the advice of Dr. Watts and some other friends in town. We have found a very numerous auditory, and apprehend, by the most moderate calculation, it must amount to near five hundred people. A great many of these are church men, who express very high satisfaction in what they hear; and, indeed, considering the character of the clergyman of the town on the one hand, and that of many of his people on the other, it seems probable that several of them would come over to the dissenters if a regular minister were fixed here, and some of them have not scrupled expressly to declare it. The dissenters seem all satisfied, many of them very much pleased; and we hope a farther acquaintance with

with our brethren and their labours, may remove remaining prejudices, and bring many to a better temper : on all these accounts we think it a desirable thing that the lecture should still be supported, but the number of our particular friends here is so very small, that it would be too burthensome, were it to lie on them alone to uphold it. We therefore submit it to the consideration of the board, whether it may not deserve some encouragement from them. We can truly say, we know not any lecture to which an exhibition is granted, where the auditory is so numerous and the prospects of usefulness seem more encouraging. Nor are we without our hopes that the continuance of this lecture, may be a means of fixing a regular minister here at length, which would be a great satisfaction to us, as we hope it might greatly conduce to the advancement of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the glory of God in the salvation of souls. One thing more we take leave to add, that though our preaching here has been evidently in the calvinistical strain, and we judged it prudent at our first appearance here to declare our sentiments very freely and expressly in that respect, yet we do not find it has given any disgust to those of our hearers who stately attend at church.

We cannot, dear Sir, conclude this address to you, without assuring you that it is matter of
abundant

abundant joy to us that the great Lord of the church is pleased to continue your life, health, and extensive usefulness. We cannot express our gratitude to you for your many important services to the public, or our thankful sense of that friendship with which you are pleased to honour us. We have no end in the proposal we now make, but the promoting that cause of truth and holiness, peace and love, in which you have been so faithfully, so warmly, and, through grace, so successfully engaged. We promise ourself a share in your remembrance at the throne of grace; and are, with sincerest respect, reverend and dear Sir, your most obliged humble servants,

W. HUNT,

J. DRAKE,

P. DODDRIDGE.

L E T T E R V.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Northampton, Oct. 8, 1737.

I AM deeply sensible of all my obligations to your goodness; obligations which your last letter greatly increased. I thankfully accept Dr. Guise's proposals, and acknowledge your kind care in sending them.

I am well convinced that he had no unkind purposes towards me, and am determined that what
hath

hath happened shall not, on my side at least, break any friendship between us. May God command a blessing on his endeavours, as well as mine, to illustrate his word and promote his kingdom : I hope he that sees my heart, knows it is my desire that this attempt of mine may be buried in silence, if the interest of truth and piety may not on the whole be promoted by the execution and publication of it. I cannot but look upon it as a dark providence; may I be enabled to know the will of God in it. Infinite wisdom hath of late seen fit to exercise me with many disappointments in my worldly affairs, I must not therefore venture to begin printing till such a number be subscribed for as will render me secure, at least that I shall not be at much expence, which, indeed, I cannot at present afford: for the very charge of my removal hath been so great, that it will be some years before I can expect to be reimbursed. I would leave myself and all my concerns with God. I often enjoy a sweet serenity of soul in the persuasion of his paternal care and love, but find it difficult at some particular seasons to prevent an anxiety of mind, which when I feel, it wearies me more than all my labours, and even more than those sorrows too, (deep as they often are) which are tempered with friendship and devotion.

That

That dear young friend, whom I mentioned in my last as in such extreme danger, is, by a most amazing and most endearing interposition of Divine Providence, recovered to some degree of strength and chearfulness; and will, I hope, be given back to our importunate prayers. She was so dear to my wife and me, being indeed like a sister in the family, that we are both very sensibly affected with the goodness of God herein, and desire you, dear Sir, would join with us in acknowledging it.

Sir, I am well convinced that good Dr. Guise will have the advantage of me in many particulars; I heartily thank you that you enter so particularly into them. One, indeed, will in part be remedied, as we have a good printing-house at Northampton; but there is another circumstance which is more than a balance, in that I shall be forced to transcribe most of my work, especially my notes, anew; which, joined to the business of correcting the press, will I fear be too much to dispatch at once speedily and accurately; which added to all the work of a tutor and a pastor, &c. the care of neighbouring churches, which are constantly supplied (at least four) by my direction. Will not my dear friend pray for me, that I may not sink under the burthen? I sometimes think, Sir, I am going to leave you, and that therefore God may force upon me this seemingly unreasonable
D necessity

necessity of dispatching this chief work of my life as an author, least that long delay, which I might else have found excuses for, might have occasioned the loss or great imperfection of it.

My hearty thanks attend Lady Abney, the young ladies, Mrs. Cooke, and all other friends who have the goodness to encourage my work.

The receipts which you ask shall be sent to Mr. Hett for you, signed by my hand, by the first opportunity.

I shall be sure to observe the hint your goodness and prudence gives me, as to noting in the reflections the verse on which each is grounded; though in the hurry in which I was obliged to send away my specimen, I unhappily omitted it. I shall also add a very complete Index, but cannot alter the scheme of a Harmony, having both promised it in the Proposals, and plainly finding that it will be acceptable to most of the friends I have consulted, though perhaps to the lower rank, as you insinuate, not so completely agreeable.

I have all the notes, and more than half the work to transcribe into long hand; a labour which I dread. I have also commentators and translators to compare, for I have hitherto writ (frequently on journies) with only my Greek Testament before me. Nevertheless I hope, by the Divine assistance, to get out my first volume in pretty good time,

time. Your influence over my worthy fellow labourer, may probably induce him to give me all the breathing time he can; it is with great pleasure, I can faithfully assure you, that I feel an undiminished love for him, and am really disposed to put the kindest construction on this disagreeable concurrence. But what are these little things, that they should alienate the affections of brethren in Christ and joint-heirs of glory. Let me once more intreat, most honoured Sir, a constant remembrance in your prayers. I am a poor weak creature, but I hope I can say, I feel a firm and chearful dependance on God, to illuminate and invigorate my mind, and he will give me such a relish of his blessed word in this review of it, as will nourish and refresh me more than these assiduous labours may fatigue animal nature. I am, reverend and dear Sir, your most respectful and affectionate humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

L E T T E R VI.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Maidwell, April 23, 1740.

MR. Gill returns to you, and the other gentlemen concerned with you in Mr. Coward's trust, his humble services and thanks for the permission you have given him to settle for a while with Mr.

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Flower,

Flower, who, if our information be right, is a very serious and hopeful young gentleman, who sincerely aims at the support of religion in his heart and family by the proposal he has made to our young friend. I have acquainted our friends at Buckingham with the result, and renewed the assurances of my sincere desire to serve them on any future occasion, though I confess I am much at a loss for the means to do it at present.

I shall recommend Mr. French to Messrs. Jennings and Bradbury, and hope their interest concurring with yours at the board, will procure him an exhibition. His exemplary piety is what I chiefly regard. Unsanctified genius and learning have almost undone us. I bless God many serious young men are now intending for the ministry; and I am, at my own charges, bringing up some at school with a view to it. I hope to be able to recommend some to the fund and to Mr. Coward's list, in whose characters you will have great satisfaction; and I shall beg leave to lodge in your hand, about Michaelmas next, a memorial of several such, for though I know they are more than you can immediately admit, it may be useful in directing you hereafter. I know, Sir, you will pardon my freedom in doing it. I claim nothing at all but only to be credited in the account I give, in which I will be careful, and, I hope, you will
not

not doubt my integrity. If you, Sir, and the other gentlemen of the board, or of Mr. Coward's trust, find other more deserving and necessitous persons, I shall rejoice to see their cases preferred even to those I have most warmly recommended.

As for Mr. C. B.'s *Distortion of Mind*, as you, dear Sir, with your usual felicity of language, express it, I apprehend it first arose from ungoverned love. *Necessity* was a fine excuse for that. Love produced indolence, neglect of study, and the succeeding genealogy, I fear, was chat, disputation, indevotion, pride, and error. I write this with grief of heart. God shews me by such instances, how little success my best endeavours can produce; for, it is certain, I have always had a peculiar tenderness for this unhappy lad, and yet, after all, see him in a great measure spoiled and ruined under my most affectionate care. Yet I am not altogether without hopes as to his recovery. I entirely agree with you, Sir, that argument in such cases too eagerly pursued, often irritates the spirits, and makes young imaginations more quick and vigorous in defending their errors. I hope I have done my duty, for I have stated what appears to me the truth with the utmost evidence I could give; and have referred him to the best writers I know in defence of it. I have, especially in devotional lectures and in our daily exposition of

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scripture,

scripture, most affectionately, and often with many tears, represented the importance of adhering to the simplicity of the gospel with steadiness and zeal, and of maintaining that holy and watchful course of walking with God which was the glory of our pious forefathers, and is, I am sure, the greatest safety of their descendants. To all this I have added, as soon as I heard of his defection, personal admonition, earnest prayer to God for him, and sometimes with him and a friend or two more, in which, so far as I could do it without insinuating any suspicions of him, I have recommended him to God even with paternal affection. If, after all this, he turns out, with all his excellent and popular talents, an Arian, a Socinian, or a Pelagian, I hope I may say, I have delivered my own soul; and I hope neither you, dear Sir, nor your worthy associates, nor God, to whom I am to give up a much more awful account, will on this head condemn me as having betrayed my trust. Yet I am not utterly hopeless as to him. He expressed a very pious turn of mind in his last prayer which I heard, and I have seen some recovered who have fallen lower than he. I wish that when he returns he may strengthen his brethren, and so much the rather, as he has been too successful in his endeavours to corrupt some of them. I have wrote the larger on this head, both to engage your prayers, and that it may

may remain as a kind of apology for me in other cases of this kind, which to be sure will occur where freedom of inquiry is allowed. *I bless God that on the other hand I have the pleasure to see one of the greatest enemies to the gospel that ever came under my care, surprisingly transformed by Divine Grace into a steady patron and bright ornament of it. A happy turn of which, if I have the honour of your company in July, I will, if God permit, more particularly inform you of.

Our humble services attend good Lady Abney, Miss, and Dr. Watts.

It will be a sad disappointment to me to miss you this vacation, on which account, I likewise beg you would please to inform me some time before you set out, and indeed, if possible, before the 19th of May, how your journey is projected, that I may order my affairs so as to have more than a transient sight of you ; this is with me a very serious affair. My services, such as they are, will be at your command one Lord's day morning if you please to accept them. I know nobody who has more right to command them.

I must conclude this letter with an extract from one which, by last post, I received from my worthy friend and quondam pupil Mr. Simon, reader of Wareham. " I entreat your interest to obtain the

assistance of the independant fund for Mr. Jacob Chapman of Beve Regis, near Wareham; they cannot maintain a minister without this assistance, and have been accustomed to receive it till Candlemas 1738-9, when, upon Mr. Coade's removal, Mr. Chapman came thither. Application has been made in Mr. Chapman's favour particularly to Dr. Guise, but it seems the Dr. has received some prejudice against him, for he has intimated that a confession of his faith would be expected previous to any assistance, which is thought to be an unusual severity. I am (continues Mr. Simon) intimately acquainted with Mr. Chapman, and am satisfied that he is a very serious gentleman, and which I think deserves peculiar regard, God has crowned his ministry with success, particularly with respect to two persons in my congregation, whom I have reason to believe savingly converted by means of his occasional discourses; one of them has been very useful in advancing religion among the young people here. This is, I think, of greater importance than an exact conformity to any set of notions how just soever. And there is little foundation for the prejudices that have been entertained against Mr. Chapman, for he is by no means in those unhappy sentiments which have prevailed in some parts of the West. I have with great pleasure heard him preach on subjects which are the

peculiar

peculiar glory of the gospel : and I am very well assured that with regard to his sentiments, he is better qualified to receive the assistance of the funds than some to whom it is given. Upon these accounts, Sir, I hope you will use your endeavours to obtain it for him, and I hope it will be granted, if not he must be obliged to remove, and in such case, as the circumstances of the congregation now are, there is very great danger of its ruin."

Thus far my friend Simon ; I have nothing farther to add on this subject, being entirely a stranger to the gentleman in question. How far it may be proper to insist on the confession required I pretend not to judge. I hope all wise and christian methods will be taken to prevent the growth of error, without laying a snare for the consciences of men, or depriving the church of the services it so much needs, merely on account of a different idea affixed to some human phrases. I leave you and my worthy fathers and brethren to act as God shall direct you, and conclude with telling you that Newport and Welford are just now agreed in giving Mr. Webb, a very plain spiritual preacher, whom I am now sending, on a unanimous invitation, to both their places ; I suppose he will prefer the latter, and what will then be done for Newport I know not. I fear these repeated disappointments will shock the interest there.

However,

However, to prevent its ruin I have ventured, in a very critical conjuncture of affairs, to buy the place, and hope to be able when I see you to give you such an account of the reason of doing it, as shall not only engage your approbation but also your assistance in making up the deficiency of what they can do towards paying for it. Excuse the length of my letter, I have taken some scrap of time in a visit to Mrs. Scawen, from whose house I write to dispatch it, and add her very affectionate services (as she is, indeed, an excellent woman,) with those of Col. Gardiner (whose indisposition prevented his meeting me here according to appointment,) and of, reverend and dear Sir, your greatly obliged and most respectful brother and servant,

P. DODDRIDGE,

P. S. We rejoice abundantly in your health and earnestly pray it may long continue.

Hearing that Dr. Watts, your brother, (to whom my humble service) had thoughts of quitting business and retiring from London to a greater distance, I have sent to tempt him into Northamptonshire. If you have not yet read Count Zenzendorf's sermons I beg you would do it, and give me your thoughts upon them, there are many christian notions in them, and a multitude of expressions which astonish rather than edify me, I hope

hope it may in part be owing to the unskilfulness of the translator; my great veneration for the author makes this very grievous to me.

Could you, dear Sir, tell me how and where I might procure charity for a worthy family in great distress? I beg if you have access to any such you would direct me where to lodge a memorial in their favour, it will secure many prayers in favour of all concerned in obtaining it.

The report of Carter is too true. He has resided in town a year, seldom coming near me. He is a pupil of Messrs. Emly, Taylor, Foster, &c. and has been their professor here for some time. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* How sad a loss of one of the best furnished lads I ever bred. But love and melancholy did the business, and gave him up bound into the Philistines hands. I am thankful however that, though he be something blinded, he has not yet attempted to pull down any temple. He is really a valuable, upright, devout man, prays incomparably, writes finely, has a charming voice, an admirable method, and wants nothing but orthodoxy and wisdom.

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR, Northampton, Oct. 29, 1741.

TO pray for you is so great a duty to the church in our parts of the world, that I hope multitudes practise it more than you will ever know while you live. I humbly hope, disabled as this fine instrument of service at present is, he that made it will repair it again, and use it for much honourable work in his temple on earth; at least, what lies beyond the grave is certain and joyful. I continue to recommend so great and so good a friend to the prayers of those I value most, and cannot be unmindful of you in my own most joyful moments. Your are, however, dear Sir, doing more good every day, than most men living in weeks and months. It was but last week that a most pious and valuable friend of mine died almost with these words in her mouth, "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." "Yes, says she, blessed be God, so I find it." And I have since received a written experience from one proposed to her communion, in which she ascribes her conversion to that hymn, "Long have I sat beneath the sound." And, for my own part, I generally read some of your psalms or hymns every morning at least, as a part of private devotion,
and

and they are always new to me, and generally impress me more than any other uninspired book without any exception, so far as I can now recollect. For this, Sir, bless God with me ; it is, perhaps, with too much pleasure that at such time I think the author is as yet on this side heaven.

Never did I see so much of the triumphs of religion in dying christians as this year has shewed me. Two excellent christians died within ten days of each other a little while ago. One (her I mentioned before) who told me she found her heart so full of the presence of God and love of Christ that it grieved her to be forced to sleep. She would have had a dying bed all wakeful with praise and love. And another expired with these words, " Blessed Jesus, I am thine, and thou art all in all to me, and to thee I come ;" and, having so said, she fell asleep. One writes slowly while relating such facts, because many tears and pauses will interrupt. But I could fill my paper with circumstances of this kind that have occurred, most of them since I had the pleasure of seeing you.

I would fain tell you more particularly how things go on in the congregation and academy, and in several places where my dear pupils are settled, but I must only say, in one word, I never had more joy or more hope. Mr. Brabant is a very serious, humble, worthy man, found in
his

his principles, spiritual in his manner of preaching, an excellent classical scholar, and, on the whole, fitter to succeed my dear friend Mr. Orton (who left us about a fortnight ago) than any other man I knew within reach ; I therefore beg he may be admitted to the favour granted Mr. Orton, and I desire your interest for that purpose at the board of the fund and with Mr. Coward's other trustees, to whom my hearty service. Mr. Brabant and I between us, will take care of catechising the children according to your proposals. I have been visiting the villages, and find a great desire in parents and children to have catechisms, the one promising to teach and the other to learn them. I suppose in and about the town of Northampton there will be at least two hundred and fifty. But I expect some assistance from others in buying books, and am willing myself to bestow some pounds yearly in it. If you will provide for forty it will be a noble help. I will put on your list such as seem to need it most. I preach every week in the villages round about, to large auditors, in the plainest manner I possibly can, and many souls are impressed, and the great waste death has made in our church is in a great measure repaired. Oh! dear Sir, continue your prayers for me, and engage all you can to assist.

Col.

Col. Gardiner is removed to Abingdon. Mr. Dickson, on an urgent affair, returned to Scotland till February. I shall deliver your kind message to both. I am very sorry to hear of Mr. Neal's indisposition, and heartily pray for his recovery. You will send my letter to Mr. Gardiner and keep his for me. Count Zenzendorf's converse warmed my heart more than his sermons instructed my mind. The most respectful services from us both to yourself, Lady Abney, Miss Abney, Mr. Picard, Mrs. Richeire, Miss Ashurst, Mr. Hort, and your good neighbours at the next door, must conclude hasty and interrupted letter from, reverend and greatly esteemed, and beloved Sir, your most affectionate and obliged humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S. If good Mr. Orton, from Salop, becomes your petitioner for catechisms without a salary, you will, I hope, remember he is one of the best and most useful of men. My humble services attend the good Doctor your brother, with his lady and family. His advices have made a hero of poor Mr. Davracott. I bless God I am in full health, and am quite easy and chearful after having spent the whole sabbath, from six in the morning till past ten in preaching, repeating, study, visiting the sick, instructing my servants, &c. but how
 2 long

long it will last God only knows; as yet I find my work, my refreshment, but visiting, baptizing, burying, preaching, with the care of my academy all the morning, leave me little time for study.

L E T T E R VIII.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Northampton, Oct. 17, 1743.

YOU may believe it has been a great hurry of business that has prevented my writing to so good a friend, whom I number among the best that earth can afford. I intended that a letter should have met you quickly after your return from Heddingham, but just about that time the scheme of an armament in these parts opened, and as Lord Halifax did me the honour of repeated calls to Horton on that occasion, and I was under a necessity of writing a multitude of letters just about that time to him and others, both in concerting and executing the scheme, it was as much as I could do to go on with my daily academic and ministerial labours. In the midst of these cares such a stroke has descended upon me, on a sudden, as has almost stunned me. Never was my heart more painfully wounded, than by the death of dear Col. Gardiner, with whom I had the most tender and endearing friendship; which, in concurrence with all his excellent qualities, and I think almost unequalled attainments

ments in vital and evangelical religion had wound him about my very soul in such a manner as I was not myself aware, and has, indeed, made his death, though attended with such glorious circumstances, the bitterest cup that ever Providence put into my hands. Not that my grief has been unallayed, or my faith altogether unactive; but the flow of various affections has agitated me strangely, and possessed my mind night and day to such a degree as poor frail nature could hardly bear. All the time I could get from necessary business has, since the tidings of his death, been spent in meditation or writing long letters to his dear lady; then, on the rumour of his death, to his daughter, a lovely young creature, who, with her parents, made for a little while one summer a part of my family. To these tender cares, happily succeeded calculations relating to the expence of patients in our hospital, which being at first made on a deficient sum, given me by our secretary, I was obliged to go over a second time, as well as to bestow great pains on stating accounts, which, by jumbling those of two years together, had been made a heap of confusion and inconsistency. These, with much ado, I ended on Tuesday morning, and on Friday evening received a message to inform me that my good friend Captain Ekins died that afternoon, and had left me guardian to his daughter, a young lady of

twelve years old, with a fortune which will, when she comes to age, be at least 13000*l*. This, after lecture yesterday, forced me over to his seat near Wellingborough, and will occasion me much care and trouble if I undertake it, or much censure if I decline it, as he was solicitous she should be educated among us, and for that reason, her mother being dead, committed her to my care, with a clause, which prudently provided, that I should if I chose it (as I certainly shall) be excused from any accounts relating either to real or personal estate. Good Lady Abney's generous heart will suggest it to her, that some handsome legacy comes with this trust, and will easily enter into my meaning when I add, that I am the more inclined to accept it, as my good friend forgot himself so far as to guard me from all possibility of receiving more than ten pounds, (as from him) whatever may become of my ward. Should I with this circumstance decline acting, it might by those who do not know me be imputed to that, and should the child be ruined for want of due and suitable care, of which if I decline the charge, I think she will be in great danger, it will be imputed to me, and my own heart will not wholly acquit me.

But, alas ! whither am I running, and where is the letter to be of which this is the preface. Re-

member I owed an excuse both to you and Lady Abney. Dear Doctor accept it, and present it to her ladyship, and Miss Abney, with all possible assurances of my sincere gratitude and affection to both. Rejoice that you were honoured as the instrument of so much good to the great and pious man, whom God has suffered to fall among the first sacrifices to this vile rebellion, and go on to do that by your prayers which this truly christian hero was not able to effect with his sword. One thing only I must add, which is, that Mr. Tinon, the bookseller at Amsterdam, desires you to write a short preface, to be translated into Dutch, and prefixed to my works, vouching for *their orthodoxy*, without which, he tells me, people will be afraid to read them. Rejoice, dear Doctor, in your own high reputation in this respect, and (while you have it) use it in favour of your poor afflicted friend, and much obliged humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

P. S. Please to send the Testament speedily to Mr. Lengueville, who thinks it will be better than an abstract from the letter in which you spoke so kindly of me.

My wife and many friends here present their best services. We long to hear how you do,

and what you think of these times. I am not without hopes that these general armaments may save our country, and therefore have judged it my duty to promote them to the utmost of my little ability and interest. I hope God is awakening our nation in mercy, we had almost slept ourselves to death.

From

From Lord BARRINGTON to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REV. SIR,

Gerard-street, July 8, 1721.

I AM obliged to you, that you would take the trouble to acquaint me with Mrs. Oakes's distress; and the rather, because you have been the first from whom I have learned the deplorable state of her affairs: she has never acquainted me with them herself, nor by any other friend than by you. She sent to me, indeed, to desire me to lend her two guineas to buy some tea in order for sale, she having been disappointed in some monies she expected to receive, which I refused her. But instead of acquainting me or any of our family with her necessities, she and her daughter seemed rather to conceal them. I know not what she has said to you to induce you to use some expressions in your letter. But you see by this, how little my honour, as you express yourself, can be really touched by her difficulties, whatever they be: since she has not thought fit to acquaint me with them, till I received the favour of yours. And, though I do not doubt but Sir Thomas Abney, on his notifying of her extreme want to you, took care

to relieve her, yet, since I received yours, I have sent her something for immediate relief.

I have been always desirous to relieve her since her husband's death in the most effectual manner. I thought that would not be by my allowing her a pension, or using any interest I could, or she could with other friends to do the like, imagining they would be soon weary of it; but rather to raise a sum of money to put her in a way to maintain herself. She told me Sir Thomas Abney was of the same opinion, and thought that her selling tea, coffee, &c. would be a proper way for her to engage in, and would concur with me in helping her to a sum of money to set her up. I desired her to tell Sir Thomas I would give my proportion, and desired him to name. She told me he said I must name first. After that I named twenty pounds; she then told me Sir Thomas said I must pay it before he would give any thing. I told her I was willing to give my money, but thought it would be of no use unless Sir Thomas would give in proportion, because I knew if I did, it would be money flung away: for twenty pounds would not be sufficient to lay in a stock to support a trade, but fifty pounds would. However, she afterwards told me that Sir Thomas would not do any thing, nor say what he would do, till I had paid the money. In confidence that a proportionable allowance

lowance would have been made by that family, I gave her my money; twenty pounds she had from me. She had a great deal before. She had also five pounds, I think, from my brother Bendysh, and five pounds they procured her from another friend. And I must say, that I take the loss of all this money, besides credit that I have given her for six pounds of tea, and five pounds since my brother Bendysh has advanced her, to be all owing to her not having that proportionable support that induced us all to give her what we have.

She is my relation, but neither she nor any of her family have pretended much friendship or good-will to me or mine. Her and their friendships have been much more elsewhere than with us. I do not think this a reason for me to abandon her in her distress: but, sure, this is a very strong reason for others not related to her in blood, to co-operate with me in supporting her and my uncle Grey. I am sure my family have suffered a great deal more by that family than Sir Thomas Abney's has done; and I neither have been, nor am wanting to my uncle Grey nor to Mrs. Oakes.

I like the scheme you propose in relation to Mrs. Oakes's family very well, and shall be very ready to contribute my share and proportion to it

with Sir Thomas Abney; though I have expences of the same kind with him in respect of three families that I represent, and expences of a very public nature too. I shall be very glad that those who are more capable of executing that scheme will see it performed, and will be pleased to let me know my quota, which shall be chearfully and thankfully complied with by, reverend Sir, your most humble faithful servant,

BARRINGTON.

P. S. The reason why I would not lend her two guineas, for the better carrying on her trade, was, that I thought if she had such a fund of credit she would never keep within any bounds.

My humble service and my lady's attend Sir Thomas, my Lady Abney, and Mrs. Gunstone.

L E T T E R II.

REV. SIR,

Beckett-house, Aug. 18, 1724.

I AM very much obliged to you for the trouble you have had in the affair of Mr. Tindall, and to Mr. Gunstone for the trouble he has given himself to recommend Mr. Tindall to Mr. Bloodworth. I beg you will accept of my acknowledgments, and render them acceptable to Mr. Gunstone.

I have

I have sometimes had great hopes of being some-
 ways useful in the world. That prospect has been a
 darling pleasure to me. I think I see it closed,
 and I hope I submit as I ought. I am not worthy of
 such an honour. Perhaps the world is not fit to
 be served. I assure you since I see my way barred
 by Providence, and not by myself, I am not only
 contented, but happier than I ever have been in
 my life. I could bear a bustle in the hopes of
 doing good, but I never loved it. I always loved
 retirement; and, since I see so little an opening
 to usefulness, I truly taste and enjoy my retreat.
 I take some care of my health, which a fatiguing
 life had very much impaired. I take some small care
 of my affairs; I enjoy my family and my friends;
 and I have a good deal of time to look into my
 bible; and, I hope I do not only find infinitely
 more benefit, but more entertainment from con-
 versing with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
 Paul and Peter, James and Judges, than ever I
 did with ministers of state or courtiers, or any
 of the men of the world: and I read pro-
 fane authors purely in subservience to the sacred
 ones. I have in the neighbourhood three or four
 friends with whom I can talk with great satisfaction
 of these matters. I only wish you near me, and
 in the state of health I enjoy. If you have not
 read Dr. Cheyne's Essay of Health and Long Life,
 I hope

I hope you will. I have a great opinion of his rules, in nervous cases especially. I heartily wish you a degree of health equal to the inclinations you have to make use of it.

My wife is to Lady Abney and yourself as I am,
a most faithful humble servant,

BARRINGTON.

L E T T E R III.

REVEREND SIR,

Tofts, June, 1725.

YESTERDAY I received the favour of yours of the 2d and 10th instant; I had before received your Second Part, which happened thus, I had bought your First Part before I received the favour of your order for it; I gave it away the other day to a friend, and so sent that order for the First Part to your Bookseller, before I had happened to hear your Second Part was come out: he sent me your Second Part by virtue of your order for the First. I sat down yesterday and to-day to read it, but, before I was got far, have been prevented from the instruction and the pleasure I propose to myself in getting through it.

However I may happen to differ from the sentiments, yet I see, by reading as far as I am got, that it has and will greatly add to the high esteem and regard I have had for you ever since
our

our acquaintance ; and, indeed, I must think very ill of myself if it did not. For what is there more valuable among mankind, than the most ardent love of truth ; the most diligent and impartial enquiry after it ; the greatest frankness in professing our opinions about it for the good of the world, and our becoming an example, as well as an advocate for the bearing with the different sentiments that are the necessary results of free enquiry ? All these, the noblest dispositions of the mind, you must convince every one you possess in the highest degree ; and are, at the same time, an instance of paying a superior homage to truth, as not only to sacrifice the ease and esteem that follows thinking with the herd, but your own late and avowed sentiments to her sovereign authority. It is without the least mixture of a compliment, that I assure you, I value a drachm of this heavenly temper beyond all the orthodoxy or truth in the world. The cursed spirits know more truth than all of us put together ; but their want of the love of it, renders them odious to God and dangerous to us : and the love of it in us, is the love of God, who is Truth, and hateth none but him that loveth and maketh a lie. And the sovereign love of truth must include in it the supreme love of virtue and piety, which are founded in truth, and in truth alone. And what then, besides
this,

this, can possibly render us amiable to our Maker, or to those amongst us, who propose the judgments he makes of things, as the standard of ours? This, however, I am sensible, may be said of him that writes on any subject with that happy temper and disposition that appears in what I read on that important subject of your Dissertations. But I will add therefore, what can be so worthy of a christian and a divine, as to borrow your own thought and expression, (for, I think, there cannot be a more beautiful one) “as to endeavour that the object of our worship may not answer the inscription on the Athenian altar?” I shall be heartily sorry to hear that any of your friends should discourage a temper that can best fit us either for the duties and enjoyments of this life or a better. If we were all in a right cue, we should all of us propose you as a pattern in our search after truth, and our professions of it; but this is not to be expected; censures will come from all who do not pay alike ready and chearful obedience to truth with yourself: arm your mind then against them. Those that censure you here, must acquire the temper they cannot bear in you, before they can relish heaven itself, as you will. Whilst they censure you then, pity them! If you have any mistakes, your openness to conviction will soon set them right, when your heart shall be irradiated with

with the morning star. But their eyes are to be opened and fortified, before they will be able to receive the full pleasure and benefit of the land of light and vision. Forgive these overflowings of my heart, which I see, on looking back on them, have run into too great length, whilst I am talking to one who, I am satisfied, can suffer for the truth as well as write and act for it. May the God of Truth bless, accept, and support you, and all you do and bear for its sake.

I have only just room to return my most hearty thanks to yourself and Mr. Price, for the respect you have shewn to my recommendation of the case of Berwick, unless I would make you pay more than as much again as they deserve. I am to him and you, therefore, without adding a word more, reverend Sir, a most faithful and most humble servant,

BARRINGTON.

From

From Dr. WATTS to Lord BARRINGTON.

MY LORD,

Tunbridge-Wells, Aug. 15, 1739.

THE very kind and condescending reception you were pleased to give to the last book which I published, demands my first acknowledgment; and it persuades me that your lordship much approves of our plain and warm manner of preaching, and our endeavours to make the great doctrines of the gospel to reach the hearts and consciences of those that hear us.

And I am called again to be thankful to your lordship for the honour you did me in ordering your late Pastoral Letter into my hands. Your lordship has so seasonably and so happily cautioned your flock against that lukewarmness, which in times of peace is ready to overspread all the professors of christianity, as, I hope, under the concurring influences of Divine Grace, will have a blessed effect upon the people under your care. I hope, also, the clergy under your inspection will not think themselves neglected in your lordship's discourse, but will not only apply themselves with all holy zeal and fervency to warn their hearers of this danger, but set themselves to root it out from

from the tribe of Levi as well as the rest of the tribes of our Israel, and that every one among the priesthood may be burning and shining lights, and powerful examples among the people.

Your lordship's distinction of the extraordinary and the ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit is so very necessary, that I think the New Testament cannot be understood without it, and I wish Mr. Whitfield would not have risen above any pretences to the ordinary influences, unless he could have given some better evidences of it. He has acknowledged to me in conversation, that it is such an impression upon his own mind that he knows to be divine, though he cannot give me any convincing proof of it. I said many things to warn him of the danger of delusion, and to guard him against the irregularities and imprudences which youth and zeal might lead him into, and told him plainly, that though I believed him very sincere and desirous to do good to souls, yet I was not convinced of any extraordinary call he had to some parts of his conduct. And he seemed to take this free discourse in a very candid and modest manner.

I own with your lordship, that so large and general a charge as he lays upon the clergy of the established church, *it is impossible for him to know certainly whether it is true or not*, and therefore these
censures

censures are by no means justifiable. But if your lordship will permit me to say, that your lordship's excellent citation of some pages of your Charge to those of your Diocese is no sufficient refutation of the censure. That very Charge was put into my hands, at least twelve years ago, in Essex, and it was the first thing that wrought in my heart a reverence and veneration for your lordship. I think no man could give better advice; and I persuade myself, all the best of the Dissenters, and I think far the greatest part of them, must have approved it with honour. But I cannot but suppose your lordship is so well acquainted with the lower clergy of England, as to know that not a great many of them preach according to those admirable directions. If they did, I easily imagine there would be no Dissenters in many parishes in England where now they abound. It is not the differences of ordination and ceremony, no, nor the imposition of them without warrant, that are so well understood as to create a large separation on those accounts merely. But it is the want of such preaching as your lordship recommends that makes many persons, of serious religion, uneasy that they find not such edification for their souls under the parochial clergy in many towns and villages. Nor do I think your lordship, and the rest of your brethren the bishops, can do any thing so effectual to lessen the

the separation, and to make all the Whitfields less regarded and less dangerous to the church, as to induce the ministers under your care to preach and converse among their people with that evangelical spirit, that zeal for the honour of God and success of the gospel, and with that compassion for the souls of men that your lordship so much approves and advises in your pious and excellent charge.

Forgive me, my Lord, I entreat you to forgive me, if my zeal for such preaching as your lordship prescribes, has carried me out so far as to forget myself and the person to whom I write, as to say any thing unbecoming the lower station of, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and faithful humble servant,

ISAAC WATTS.

From Sir GILBERT ELIOTT to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

London, Jan. 21st, 1726.

MY wife was favoured with your's of the 14th instant. I return a thousand thanks for the obliging expressions of your concern for us, and particularly for your christian sympathy, in comforting my wife upon the melancholy occasion of my terrible misfortune and greatest unhappiness. I took the first opportunity I could to kiss your hands, gratitude and inclination equally engaging me to it. I propose to wait upon you when you come to town. In the mean time, give me leave to put you in mind of the request I made you some time since, about a catechism of natural religion, which is a subject untouched, and would be, I am persuaded, of singular use. I must tell you what brought this to my memory: I was reading the other day in the fourth volume of Monsieur Saurin's Sermons, *Sur les travers de l'esprit Humain*, page 338; these are his words: *Combien peu y ena-t-il qui aient l'art & même temps l'intention de proportionner la foi des enfans à leur âge n'exigeant qu'ils ne croissent à*
l'âge

l'âge de dix ans que ce qu'ils peuvent concevoir à cet âge-là & qu'ils ne croient à l'âge de quinze ce qu'ils peuvent concevoir à l'âge de quinze, & ainsi du resté ? Combien peu de Catechismes, où cette gradation d'années & de capacité soit observée, & où l'on ne propose d'abord les vérités les plus abstruses du Christianisme ? I hope this was a happy providence, directing me to address you, as the gentleman in the world, that I believe, without flattery, to be the most capable of so necessary and useful a work. I hope for a favourable answer, and should be glad to know when you come to town.

My most humble service attends my lady Abney, Mrs. Gunstone and the young ladies. I am, with most sincere esteem, reverend Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

GILB. ELIOTT.

L E T T E R II.

REVEREND SIR,

Epſom, March 4, 1727-8.

I HAVE your favour of the 1st instant, to which I had made an immediate return, but business prevented. Mr. Mayo has written to me, which I told

F 2

you

you I could not accept, as a reparation for the injury ; but such a letter, so void of manners, so full of jesuitical evasions, I should have believed it dated from the Sorbonne, if it had been polite enough. Since he will not make the acknowledgment before the company where he uttered the slander, there is no more to be said ; forgive me, dear Sir, to appeal to you, for the healing proposal I made in justification of my conduct, if necessity require it. A missive apology, is properly an expedient or palliative cure, in no manner equal to the present case ; and, I do assure you, I demand nothing of him but what conscience and honour would both oblige me to, was I in his situation : I cannot but give you one passage in the words of his letter : “ I freely ask your pardon, which I think, by the law of Christ, I have as much reason to expect to receive as give, where it is needful for me, or where I am obliged to ask it.” I must observe, to take the co-herece and structure of his letter, it is asking pardon for nothing, a mere evasion. But, if I understand the law of our blessed Lord, no man can expect pardon for injury to his neighbour, if he be capable to make full restitution in a proper manner, and refuse to do it. I am sure I have great reason to ask pardon of you, for the trouble and interruption I have given on this melancholy occasion, and to return

return you a thousand thanks for all your civilities and favours.

My most respectful services ever attend my Lady Abney, the young ladies, and Mrs. Gunstone. I am, reverend and dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

GILB. ELIOTT.

From Mr. DANIEL MAYO to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Kingston, Feb. 29, 1727.

I FIND in your last a fresh specimen of your humbleness and goodness, and subscribe to your prudent advice, and the rather, because as I promised you, I am willing you should judge what is fit for me to do in the troublesome affair; as a kind friend to both parties you are engaged with.

I have herewith sent you a copy of a letter I have by this post sent to Sir G. E. in which I have endeavoured to suppress such thoughts as will arise, when I think of the strange temper and carriage of some persons in this whole affair; but, perhaps, you may think a word or two might yet have been spared. Whether I should have omitted any words I will not be positive, but the things intended thereby I am sure should be thought on by him, and they will be thought on with a becoming temper if he be what I gladly hope he is. I am, Sir, your most obliged friend and humble servant,

DANIEL MAYO.

P. S. I design to wait on you in Lime-street on Saturday at about five o'clock,

To

To Sir G. E.

S I R,

Kingston, Feb. 29, 1727.

I F you had written to me yourself, I should not have delayed an answer so long as since the time I received a letter from your son Charles : by what I read therein, and hear from other hands, it appears how highly you resent some unguarded expressions of mine, in private conversation, which I am persuaded have been misrepresented to you. What the words were, as I cannot exactly remember, so I am confident no one that heard them can take upon himself to repeat upon oath ; but this I am sure of, they did not proceed from malice in my heart, nor were spoken with design to calumniate, falsely, any person living or dead : nor do I believe any one of the hearers (not he in particular that related them) did in the least suspect or imagine any such thing. For this I appeal to every one then present.

If I had an opportunity of giving you a true and full information of the whole matter, in the presence of the Reverend Mr. Watts, or the whole company in which I then was, I believe yourself would not think my offence deserves so many and such severe accusations and menaces as are in your son's letter. God and my own conscience acquit

me of the guilt of malice and enmity, &c. which I am there charged with; and upon consultation with the learned in the law, I fear no ill consequence, as to myself, by any legal prosecution; which, however, for many reasons, very obvious to every body, I think ought not to be commenced nor threatened.

Though I cannot remember exactly the words spoken, and never shall make any confession of particular words said to be spoken by me, nor own such guilt as I know myself to be (I had almost said perfectly) free from; yet, as I have at all times, when this matter hath been mentioned, readily acknowledged, so I now in this manner own to you, I was in the wrong to say what I said, because I impertinently talked about what did not concern me; and I am truly sorry for what was said, especially considering how it hath been represented and resented; and so far as you are, or can be justly offended thereby, I very freely ask your pardon. I do most sincerely wish you and all yours prosperity in this world, and eternal happiness in the next, and remain, Sir, your's in all good offices you will please to accept of, D. M.

From

From Governor BELCHER to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

Whitehall, Jan. 8, 1729-30.

I BELIEVE you will find among your last year's New England letters, one that came by me from my esteemed friend the Reverend Mr. Colman; and I think sometime in April last, I had the pleasure of waiting on you at my Lady Abney's, and afterwards of seeing you at Tunbridge, since which I had promised myself the satisfaction of a more particular personal acquaintance with Dr. Watts; but the sovereign God (in whose hands our times are) having lately confined you at Theobalds, and called me to an affair of life that ingrosses much of my time to be in readiness to look homeward early in the spring; I say, these things have debarred me of that satisfaction and happiness I have so much desired. In New England I have often regaled myself with your ingenious pieces, and I can assure you (without a compliment) all Dr. Watts's works are had in great esteem and honour amongst us. It was with uncommon concern I observed your weak, tender state of health the last Lord's-day, and although, as you very excellently set forth to us, " That the

God of Nature can make new vessels, and the God of Grace can fill them with treasure: and, although the apostle tells us we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, yet Christ's ministers are the salt of the earth, and how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. And when Christ fills his vessels with precious treasure, and makes his ministers burning and shining lights, God's people will sorrow most of all to hear the ministers tell them, they fear they shall see their faces no more." But, I hope, it may stand with the holy will of God to restore and confirm your health, that his church may have Dr. Watts long in store, still to go on, by the grace and assistance of your ascended Lord, in multiplying the souls of your ministry to his honour and glory, and the eternal happiness of those whom you shall turn from the error of their ways, and then those sons and daughters you have here begotten in Christ, will serve as sparkling jems to give lustre to that crown of righteousness which God, the righteous judge, will fix on your head in the great day of his appearance. Amen. God grant it may be so.

And now, Sir, since it has pleased the all-wise God (in his providence) to remove me from one ordination of life to another, and to a station where

where I must stand in a glaring light, exposed to the view of the whole world, and every one will think himself intitled to be my *censor morum*; to subject my words and actions to his ill-natured cavils and criticisms: and, I am sensible, great is the burthen and duty of the place with which the King has honoured me. I therefore desire you to join with me, while I bow my knees to the God of all grace and wisdom, that he would give me a wise and understanding heart, to discern between good and bad, and to know how to go out and in before his people. Every day fills my soul with care and solicitude, that I may discharge my trust to the honour of God, the good of his people, and my own comfort and credit. When I consider how ungratefully and unprofitably I have lived to God and man, it is with shame that I tell you, I am this day entered into the forty-ninth year of my age. My days are swifter than a post, and short (perhaps very short) the race I have to run; may I then double my diligence for the honour and service of God and man, and so as may most of all promote my own eternal happiness.

You will pardon me for the freedom I have taken with a gentleman, more a stranger than I could wish, and believe me to be, with great esteem
and

and respect, reverend Sir, your most obedient
humble servant,

JONA. BELCHER.

P. S. My service to the Rev. Mr. Price.

L E T T E R II.

DEAR SIR,

Boston, Nov. 29, 1736.

IN June last came to my hand your favour of the 28th of February, when I was sorry to find Mr. Belcher disappointed of the pleasure of your conversation in the city by your confinement at Newington, where I hope he soon waited on you. I desire to own it, with the humblest and highest sense of gratitude to my gracious God and Father, that I have continued accounts of my son's sobriety and diligence, and I am the more pleased with what I formerly wrote him on the score of his standing a candidate, since you fully agree with me in those sentiments ; yet, as I then hinted, if God spares his life, and opens a fair door, I should be pleased he might find a seat in St. Stephen's Chapel at the next election, but that is at a great distance, and it is not worth while to be anxious about it.

From

From the arrival of one ship after another, I find Governor Shute gradually decaying; may his last days be his best, and when numbered and finished, may he receive a crown of life.

Governor Holden gives me the account of the miscarriage of the repeal of the test: considering how cold the ministry were in the matter, it is a pity the attempt was made yet; when it will be a convenient season is hard to say.

My best respects always wait on the good Lady Abney.

I thank your kind condolence on the death of my late dear sister Oliver, who did worthily in her generation, and I doubt not but, through the mercy of God in Christ, she is become a member of the "general assembly and church of the first-born, and now lives with the spirits of the just men made perfect."

I am much pleased with your ingenious little book, the Redeemer, Sanctifier, &c. and sorry there should be occasion for it in this part of the world. "God planted this land with a noble vine, wholly a right seed;" and justly now complains, "How art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine! And how is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! Yet I will not despond, for the residue of the spirit is with God, and he can revive his
work

work in the midst of the years." This we must always pray for in the name of his well-beloved son, our exalted Redeemer, and powerful intercessor.

I thank you very kindly for your good wishes to my government, to myself, and to my family.

I am now, Sir, with a faint voice, and with a trembling hand, to acquaint you of the death of my late dear wife, on the 6th ult. God has removed the desire of my eyes with a stroke; she, who had been the faithful divider of all my cares, and the doubler of all my joys. I desire now to remember, that "Affliction does not spring out of the dust, nor does God willingly afflict, or grieve the children of men; I would therefore bow down and adore, and say, I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? And, wherefore doth a living man complain? A man for the punishment of his sins?" Especially since, in this judgment, God gives me great reason to sing of mercy; for she had the full use of her reason till the last moment, and died in great peace and serenity; and while I tell you some of her last expressions you will charitably hope so. She died on the Wednesday, and on the Monday before, as I was sitting with her on the bed, I said to her, "My dear, you draw nigh to the grave." She replied, *I know it, my dear.* I then said, "It is a great

great work to die." She answered, *So it is, but Christ Jesus died for the chief of sinners, or I should die without hope.* She then went on; *He is an almighty Saviour, and saves to the uttermost those that come unto him; therefore, my dear, I am not afraid to die.* And again, with a loud voice, she said, *He is a lovely Saviour, and I love him with my whole soul; and could not love him, if he had not loved me first.* She has trod the dark valley, whither I must soon follow her; and the voice of God to me in this providence is, "Be you therefore ready also." Let me then, sir, ask you to join your prayers to mine, that by the assistance of the holy spirit of God I may "stand with my loins girt, and my light burning, that whenever the son of man comes I may enter into the joy of my Lord." May you and I meet and dwell for ever there, through infinite riches of grace and mercy, in Jesus Christ. Amen. Reverend Sir, your assured friend, and most obedient servant,

J. BELCHER.

P. S. Your Packets under my cover were all carefully delivered.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

MY MUCH ESTEEMED FRIEND,

S I R,

Boston, Aug. 1, 1737.

YOUR religious kind letters of the 3d of March, and 2d of April, I have read once, and again with much pleasure, and they are now open before me for an answer, which I return with the most sensible gratitude, for the great respect and honour you do to the memory of my late dear Mrs. Belcher, as well as for the ingenious, pious hints you suggest for my profitable reflection and meditation ; she was, Sir, much my crown and glory, and I have great reason to believe from the course of her life, as well as from her serenity at death, that my irreparable loss is her eternal gain. I may and ought to mourn my own loss, even to the latest period of life, and the voice of God to me in this melancholy providence is, that I be “ working out my salvation with fear and trembling :” and then I shall not mourn for myself, “ as one without hope ;” God has done his pleasure, at which I dare not murmur, but would lie prostrate in the dust before him, for my sins have exceeded. How dreadful must the case of that man be, who has not a God to repair to, when such scenes are drawn for his entertainment ? Dear Sir, the prayer
you

you have offered for *the watchful eye of providence and grace to guard me* in my separated state of solitude, is the highest instance of your love and friendship ; and I doubt not but that (through the powerful intercession of the great Mediator) “ your prayer will come before God as incense, and the lifting up of your hands as the evening sacrifice.”

I was glad to find my son had (though late) done his duty, in paying his just regards to his father's friend at Newington ; and I thank you from the bottom of my heart, for your kind concern towards him. I know he lives in an age and place, and in an employment, that continually environ him with a numerous variety of snares and temptations, and that nothing less than the matchless powerful influences of the grace of God are able to keep him, and to the grace of God I desire to commend him, and thereto leave him, nor am I without encouragement so to do, and to give praise to God for ever and ever, while I hear he yet saves him from any open flagrant vices.

It is my duty, and has been my pleasure (during his distance from me) to be his monitor on his birth-day, by telling him, he was born to die ; and I take the freedom to enclose you what I now write to him on that head, which you will read, seal, and let it find the way to his chambers, not taking notice to him, at any time, that you have read it ;

but what I design in it is, that (in your conversation and letters, when you will please so to honour him) you would now and then harp upon the same string, and you will, doctor, forgive this trouble, when you consider the ineradicable Στοργή, implanted by the God of nature in us fathers.

Omnis in Ascanio chari stat cura parentis.

I pray you to make my most respectful compliments to the excellent lady Abney, to whom I am highly obliged for her condolence and kind wishes.

I thank you for your two books: that on Humility I have twice run over, and am much pleased. Methinks a man that loves this world, or a better, should rejoice to shine in that virtue. What says Solomon? "Before honour is humility." And what says St. Peter? "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." I have not quite got through your *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, but am greatly gratified, so far as I am gone; and when you are pleased to oblige the world with any thing new, I shall be glad to have it as a strength and ornament to my small collection. And I am also to beg your picture, one of which graces our college library.

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The several packets committed to my care, found the way to their owners. I ask your acceptance of our last election sermon, preached by the reverend and pious Mr. Lorlney; and of a grammar lately put out by one of the sons of our college.

Mr. Belcher sent me a copy of your letter to him, of the 19th of Jan. last, from Newington, respecting the epitaph he had prepared for the tomb of his late dear mother. Your frankness and freedom with him is such a test of your sincere regard to his honour, as I cannot enough thank you for, and with such a grateful sense does he represent it to me. I approve your corrections in general, and like your last thought of saving the whole, the first part to be on the top stone of the tomb, the two other parts to be on the two sides. I by no means like the word *barr'd*; for the dust of the faints is not imprisoned, but only rests from its labour. Poets, they say, must be born so, which I am sure I was not, therefore you must pardon the blunder, if I think the two first lines might run thus:

Peaceful within this silent shrine's *preserv'd*,
A while that sacred dust which angels guard.

When with your kind help he has made the matter perfect, I shall be expecting it for inscription.

Reverend and dear Sir, I wish above all things that "thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." Thus, I am, your friend and servant,

J. BELCHER.

L E T T E R IV.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Boston, May 20, 1741.

I AM ashamed to look over the date of your kind letter of the 4th of May last, which came to my hands the 1st of November following, yet I can rely on your goodness for pardon in owning it so late; while you consider how much I am ingrossed in the care of two of the king's provinces, sometimes, I fear, too much to the neglect of the great business of the King of kings; and yet I would humbly hope I have an eye to his glory, in the whole of my administration: "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards;" and even this determination of the great Governor of the world, is designed in mercy to mankind. What says the wise preacher, "In the day of adversity consider;" and his pious father, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." If the fruit of our troubles be "that our ways please the Lord, he will make even our enemies to be at peace with us." May the holy and eternal spirit of God take the full possession of my heart, that this may become my case, through
riches

riches of mercy in Jesus Christ. He that said to the foaming billows, "Peace, be still," and it was so, can disconcert all faction and opposition, can scatter every cloud, and bid the shades of night fly before the springing day and rising sun! A governor must endeavour to mail himself with patience, *Sævis esse tranquillum in undis*. I desire "to be in subjection to the Father of spirits," and to have faith in him, and this constant conclusion in myself, that all the carvings of his providence towards me are best for me.

I again greatly rejoice in the favour of God, in so well restoring you after such a threatening stroke; but I rejoice still more in your humble and pious submission, while you can say, "you are waiting his will to be employed here, or to be called away hence at what hour he pleases." Oh! Sir, how thankful must the christian be that has thus got upon the last round of the ladder. My greatest gratitude flies into your bosom, in return for all your prayers and good wishes to me and to my family: as to myself, I am just at the heels of fixty; my few remaining moments are crowded into a narrow compass, "my days are swifter than a post or a weaver's shuttle, they will soon be extinct, and the grave be ready for me." Oh! then may I, by the sovereign powerful grace of God, double my diligence, that I may be ready when

my Lord shall call. I intreat, and (as the duty of your function requires) I charge you, when you kneel before the throne of God and the Lamb, (in secret) not to forget me ; for an alluring world and a tempting devil are never weary of their attacks. I am greatly obliged to the excellent Lady Abney, to whom you will present my humble respects. Happy she ! who has turned her widowed state into an everlasting match with the glorious bridegroom of the church of God. By the last ship I covered, to my son, a letter for you, from our dear friend Dr. Colman, wherein, I doubt not, he has given you an account of the outpourings of the spirit of God in a wonderful measure, of late, in this and the neighbouring provinces ; to his name alone be the glory. I am, Sir, with the most perfect esteem and friendship, yours, &c.

J. BELCHER.

P. S. When you favour the world with any new production let me partake.

From

From Mr. BENJAMIN COLMAN to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Boston, Jan. 16, 1739-40.

A WEEK is past since your letter and packet of September 17th, and another of October 12th, arrived together in Captain Forbes. I thank you for the books bought, and the account given of them; I find it exact and judicious. I could not bear to read Thompson through now I have him; I thank you for not buying the second volume; he studies obscurity and labours intricacy, while Sommerville's chain is smooth as an eagle's soaring. All of Young's pleases, edifies, and surprises. Mr. Lowe on Perfection is not equal I think to his Serious Call, which I had seen before. I present you now with our Boston edition of your Hymns and Guide to Prayer, done well for us. My Withered Hand, that little Sermon, is like to be of some use here, and is in the press again, together with a little book of four sermons on the Incomprehensibleness of God.

Mr. Whitfield arrived some months past at Philadelphia, where, and through the Jerseys and at New-York, he preached daily to incredible multitudes with great eloquence and zeal, as a good judge there writes me.

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He

He was pleased to send me a letter and ask a correspondence with me. He was shewn at New-York a letter of mine which named him with respect, but wherein I happened to say "he is but a young divine;" his sermon of Justification led me to say so. "You said right, Sir, says he to me, I am but a novice in the things of God; I can only say I desire to know the whole will of God, that I may communicate it to others. Christ is so good a master that I would have all men drawn after him. He is pleased to let me experience daily the teachings of his blessed spirit, and to shew me the riches, freeness, and eternal duration of his love. Pray that I may be able to see all things clearly."

America is like to do him much honour, as you will see by the prints from New-York and Philadelphia here inclosed. And it is a most happy prospect to me, in favour of many a poor soul, through the colonies of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, that he is gone preaching the gospel through them, and praying, in his way to Georgia. He proposes to see Boston in his return to Europe about June next, by God's will; and our town and country stand ready to receive him as an angel of God. Indeed, ministers and people, all but his own church, speak of him with great esteem and love: he seems spirited from on high in an extraordinary manner, assisted and prospered.

Mr. Holden sent me over his Journals and Answer to the Bishop of London, I read there of his calling in to see you as he passed through Newington, but you nor Dr. Guise have said a word to me of him ; nor do I find how the dissenting ministers stand affected to him ; it may be prudent in them to be silent : but, in what of mercy or judgment, God may mean this rise of the methodists to the glory of the church or the nation in general, time must show. I shall be glad of your thoughts on this matter.

As to the account I sent you of the story from Mrs. Rowe's own mouth, I leave it to Mr. Rowe to make what use of it he pleases, and am far, I assure you, from affecting to have it inserted at large in my words, or as from me. The more I consider her beauteous life and works the more I admire the grace of God which preserved, animated, and honoured her so. But it is a pleasure to me that you have named me to the Hon. the Lady Hartford on the occasion, whom I love in the truth for her love to Mrs. Rowe, and her most endearing returns of high affection. Such beauteous souls are formed and shewn for the love and esteem of all the ends of the earth. Mrs. Rowe's hiding that secret from Lady Hartford, seems almost a prohibition from her of telling it to the world ; or, if the world now hears of it, the silence of her
after-

after-years about it may give it a double force and edge upon the ingenious and pious part of mankind.

Mr. Sargeant goes on with great pleasure in his work, and Providence has sent up a worthy gentleman with his family to him, whose discreet and very amiable daughter he has married.

I am sorry to hear of your continued low state of health, and that you think it proceeds from a shock of the paralytic kind ; but the Lord, whose you are, when on earth healed the sick even of the palsy ! may he receive, support, refresh the soul, and prolong the life and service of my beloved friend. Let not my correspondence with you be a burthen and oppression. I hope God will yet give you health to add to your last songs on death, " the world to come."

I have had some revival the summer past, and the winter has not hitherto broken it ; indeed, it has begun in a manner but this week, and earth and sky are alikely dazzling bright ; a serenity which you (our revered mother isle) are altogether a stranger to ; it braces up also our nerves, and makes the old, whom it does not kill, think themselves hail again for a season.

I have wrote to the ministers of Connecticut of the packet for them, which you have committed to Mr. Cox's care, that they may write to his
indolent

indolent shopkeeper here, whom I call so as I find him, on his going off to London, and now on his return ; for by him I sent for some books, and at the end of two months after his arrival here heard nothing of his bringing any, though his money lay ready ; and now two months more are gone and not a word from him, so I suppose he bought none, or has sold them to another. I have sent my friends the Rules of the Salisbury library.

I thank you, Sir, for your free and kind advice to Mr. Hilhouse, by his messenger Mr. Mason, and have informed the gentlemen of Connecticut of it, to whom (with us) it is very agreeable.

And as to your question, " Why we give rings at funerals, and have plate in our houses, when we have no silver and gold currency among us, as a medium of trade ? " I must first own, that Boston has always been too expensive in funerals, and also in vessels of plate in the house. A-la-mode and lutestring scarfs were our mourning twenty years ago, and we reformed to rings, which were about half the expence. Our people expect a great deal of labour from their ministers when their families are sick, and have it ; and the richer in return gives us a ring, which till death returns again is, it may be, all the vail from them ; three or four in a congregation excepted. The gold
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the meanwhile is only matter of trade and merchandise in the goldsmith's shop among us, like other goods ; and as to the silver, it is bought up by the merchants to make returns to you to pay debts or buy more goods from you ; and if one or two hundred thousand pounds in silver or gold were brought in among us to-morrow we owe it to you, and ought to remit it presently, or to make gain of it, or purchase what we need from you, we send it to you. It is true, Sir, as you say, " A public self-denial in these instances would soon mend the matter with us," that is, in half a century it would do it, for so long the want of it has been bringing us into these circumstances, and as long there have not been wanting public and private warnings of the wrong and injurious step ; but, beside the private spirit of traffic, wherein every one is apt to look to himself first, we have abundance of strangers from you and other places, who look only to themselves and employers, and what will make the easiest and best returns ; and buy up the silver and gold, and wanting often to return presently themselves, will give six-pence in an ounce more for one, and so in proportion for the other ; and our merchants are hereby forced to do the same, or give up the staple metal into their hands. How to extricate ourselves is difficult, and to preach the self-denial to the merchant is, alas ! too much in vain.

War

War is proclaimed, and our Americans are much spirited for it, but our poor province least defenceless and naked by sea and land, the instruction from the king to our governor, tying up his hands, and our representatives tying up therefore theirs. If France goes into the war, down will come the Indians, we may fear, on our wide extended borders; there is not a fort in any good repair or furniture, nor a soldier or officer to be paid, and the same on our coasts. God can protect us, but surely expects we use the means of common prudence, but we have not self-denial enough to stoop one to another in an exigence, or to the king for self-preservation. We need the more of the pity and prayers of our friends; but how can we pray in faith, save in the pity that is infinite to pardon and heal us, and save us? When nearest at the throne of grace, bear us on your heart, and him in particular who is under the strictest bands of friendship and gratitude. Sir, your affectionate brother and servant,

BENJ. COLMAN.

P. S. If we hear not from one another as we expect, we must look that vessels and letters will sometimes fall into the hands of enemies.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R II.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Boston, May 7, 1739.

YOUR favour of April 4, is before me, and the box, containing Dr. Dodderidge and Dr. Guyse's Paraphrases, for me and Mr. Cooper, together with the two sets of Mrs. Rowe's works. We like well the binding, and are greatly obliged to you for the care and trouble you have been at to oblige us as you have done. I thank you for the two separate pictures of Mrs. Rowe. Her soul and face were both pleasant to me. I had in a manner lost the features, which I now perfectly remember. The account of her divine life, and walk with God, rises beyond my before raised ideas of her: her serenity, retirements, diligence and abundant charities, are all wonderful. The father's character is bright as the offspring's, and very just according to all I saw in the two years of my acquaintance with him. He told me once, that Philomela was not to be compared with her mother. It pleased me beyond expression to hear him talk of his deceased. And so now does the account of the manner and way whereby Providence began their acquaintance. He told me one forenoon, as I rode out with him, that he had buried a younger sister of Philomela's, who was
brighter

brighter and lovelier than she, and wrote as well, in prose and poetry; but both of them together were not equal to their perfect mother. After dinner, being alone with Mrs. Singer, (it was in 1698) I told her what her father had said to me of her excelling sister. She was perfectly pleased at it, and answered, "That as she was the youngest, so she was much the most gay and cheerful, and pleasing to her father; she always saw that he most delighted in her, and that she was indeed a lovely daughter and sister." The whole conversation that afternoon was upon her. Philomela told me, that this sister loved her to a great excess; it was often troublesome to her; she would be ever with her, and broke in often upon her retirements for study; and when they retired by consent for composing, she would bring generally more lines written, but as she thought too hastily. The younger daughter was wont to invent ways to try the affection of her sister, and to win it more and more, and would often complain that she returned not an equal love. She gave me several instances of those childish ways of endearment, which I well remember; and then she proceeded to give me the account of her death.

"It was (said she, and if I give the words, I will keep exactly to the things she said; and also up to the life and spirit with which she gave me the endearing story; which I soon after wrote down,
and

and now keep to the record I then made of it; for it struck me too much to be willing ever to forget it.)

“ It was, said she, in my sister’s death that my father was to be tried; but it was I that was taken sick, and my sickness prevailed to a very dangerous degree; and when the physicians let them know my great danger, and the little hope they had of my recovery; this dear sister came to me with a visible concern, and earnestly besought me to tell her, whether I was ready and willing to die, if God should call for me from them by this sickness, for she was afraid I should die; and she could not comfortably part with me but only to go to Christ; she hoped therefore that my interest in him was comfortable and clear to me.” I earnestly turned to her and said, “ Why, sister, do they think me in such hazard? I must confess to you that my distress would be great, on the account of my soul, if I thought my death were now coming on, for I have not that full assurance of my interest in Christ, which I have always begged of God I may have before he pleases to call me hence.” No sooner had she heard me say this, but she fell as in an agony on her knees by my bedside, and in a manner inexpressible, for fervour and humility, she begged of God, “ That if her father must have the grief of burying one of his children, it might be her! for through his free grace, and to
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the glory of it, she could joyfully profess before him, her assured hope of her interest in his everlasting mercy, through Jesus Christ ! wherefore she could willingly surrender herself to die, if it might please God to grant her sister a further space for the making her calling and election sure." Having prayed thus, in a transport the most surprising and astonishing to me (said Philomela) she earnestly kissed me and left the room, without giving me time or power to answer her a word ; and what is almost incredible to relate, from that hour or two I grew better and recovered, but she took to her bed and died in a few days. Conceive, if you can, Mr. Colman, (said she) how I was astonished at this event of Providence, and overwhelmed with sorrow ! Yet I recovered health, but the load of grief upon me, and wonder at the strange occurrence, confined me to my chamber for five or six weeks. My chief work was to consider the mind of God in this his mercy to me, that I might make it evident, by his grace with me, that in love to my soul he had wrought this. I set myself to comfort my father what I could, and this was also his care toward me ; nor durst we be inconsolable under a bereavement, so circumstanced ; yet my mourning is always returning to this day, with the remembrance of a love strong as death."

Such was the exalted conversation of that afternoon. I told her I was more in love with the *dead* than with the living! that she must yield her *sister* the victory, and confess (what she had before desired) that her sister *excelled* her in the *strength* of love as well as in the fondness and fervour of it. Any body now may well think that I could never forget the substance of such a resolution, or the manner wherein it came from those charming lips, which spoke it (I thought) with a flow and force I can little give the story in my relating it. But how can it be thought that this lovely and superior person should so freely *reveal* this secret and wonder *to me*, a stranger and unknown in the land, and *hide* it from many other of her friends, superior far in merit and in her just esteem! This is altogether unaccountable to me as it may well be to others: but this I must own, that from the first hour I saw her, Mr. Singer entered into such a love and freedom with me, that he even obliged me to write to his daughter, and made me promise to come and see them often; both which I did, and was received (and spoken of when absent) in such manner by them (as Mr. Handon told me) that a just modesty will never suffer me to repeat. I more than twice spent days together at the house when I visited, constrained by their apparent pleasure, as well as expressed desires of my stay. And if ma-
dam

dam was more on the reserve at other times to her friends, respecting this wondrous event, yet the father's morning talk with me, about this younger daughter, may be seen to be evidently the leading occasion into a sudden betraying the secret to me, if I might presume to speak to him of it. And, dear Sir, I doubt not, but my serious affirmation to you of the truth of the foregoing conference with Mr. Singer and his daughter, will gain it a credit with you, so I intreat you to shew what I have written to Mr. Rowe, with my hearty thanks to him for the discharge of the trust committed to him in so polite a manner; and if I knew how to obtain credit with him by adding more, I would not fail to do it, for you may well think page 13 gave me a great shock, to read there of "*assuring the world that it is a story without foundation. It cannot be supposed that the story, confidently reported by some among you at London, or elsewhere, and credited by a great many others,*" should take its rise here at *Boston*, and transport and scatter itself, as I perceive it has, with credit among many; and as for the malevolent *turn*, which *fear* seems to give the aspect of the story, as an argument against Mrs. Rowe's early piety, it seems to me altogether unkind and unjust, and enough is said to shew it to be so in that 13th page. The story, if true, like a *shechinah* of light, casts a brightness

both on the living and the dead, in my way of thinking. Had Philomela then died, I see no reason to imagine but it had been infinite gain to her, and all the bright *scenes* of her after life and usefulness, were vanity and emptiness in her own eyes, in comparison of any moment's enjoyment that her *sister* was passed into: her letters and poems are full of this. The marvel was, (and yet why so marvellous?) a love strong as death to the dear soul of a sister, on the supposed brink of eternity, and a willingness to take her place, under a full sense of her own eternal safety! I have a sister now alive, who, I am sure, on a like blessed advantage on her side, would readily do the like. And I remember the words of a minister here to his sisters, as his wife lay a dying, with great humility and earnestness; "Ah, how gladly could I lie down in her place and die, might she be spared!" It is true, there seems on every hand something extraordinary in the story; and so there is in the whole story of that happy, pious, humble family; husband, and wife, and daughters. It was needful for the world that Philomela should continue in the flesh, to shine as she has done in a dark age of sensuality and infidelity, and give it an example of a conversation in heaven, living up to the raptures of her admired pen; and the more let it be as a vision from the dead, to work or allure; if indeed she

she was spared from apprehended death in such a wondrous manner, as has been related. The difficulty methinks may be thus solved; “that it seems to have been her judgment and will, in her advanced years, that this singular providence in her favour and honour should be kept secret; and this might well become her *native* humility and prudence, or the ripeness of it rather in her advance in life, avoiding what might seem vain glorious to divulge, or indeed what such an age as ours might probably treat with ridicule and derision. But nothing of this nature can make me ashamed to own the perfect credit I give to the relation from such a mouth as Mrs. Singer’s. I doubted there might be an error, p. 9, in the date of this young gentlewoman’s age, making it her twentieth year: Mrs. Singer was but in her twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth years when I was at Bath; and if I mistake not her sister’s death had been more than six years past; but in this I might be mistaken; and the rather, because I knew not her age, but judged her to be five or six years younger than myself, and now find she was but one. The last letter I had from Mr. Singer was in the year 1709, part of which, if I durst communicate to you, would shew the high interest I had in his heart, and the vast freedom with which he let me into it. I have placed my beloved friend (my acquaintance with her being the great honour

of my youth) in our library at Cambridge, for the admiration, veneration and instruction of our youth, in all that is pious and polite. I thank you again for the separate pictures, which shall adorn my best rooms. If I can find a safe hand I will send you some gold to discharge your generous advance for me, with this letter. I pray God to restore your health, and continue your useful life to more glory to his name, and good to souls. To hear of your illness strikes me; but God who has so often restored, and so long used you, will I hope still preserve you in favour to his church, and to your many friends, and among them to him who earnestly asks your continued love and prayers. Sir, your affectionate brother and humble servant,

BENJ. COLMAN.

P. S. The work of God goes on at Honstato-nock, and as you will see by the enclosed, another door seems to be open above them; may God make it a wide and effectual one. I enclose to you my small late prints; and give you the trouble of others to my friends.

An uneasy spirit revives here among us, about our currency, and want of more paper money, the emission of which is forbid by the king's instructions to the government, above the rising charges of every year. Great changes have been made in
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the election of representatives, but when met they have chosen just the same counsellors ; and as within doors they seem quiet, we grow stiller without. We hear of, and read the uneasinesses of the nation, about the convention with Spain ; it is much the same in the plantations here. We must cross near their shores to our own islands, but nearer or further our vessels are searched ; which who can submit to ?

Your songs for children, being out of print here, and much wanted to scatter among them, I engaged two of our young bookfellers to reprint them ; which the rest hearing of, some of them fell in, and about three or four thousand of them are printed ; and as soon as my little birds learn two or three of them they come to me, some to my home, others as I visit their parents, singing and making melody with their stammering lips, and thanking me for their book.

You will see by the enclosed, the liberty that Mr. Smith of Carolina has taken to borrow some of your tender lines for the embalming the name of his brother Basset. Mr. Basset was born and educated in N. E. Mr. Smith came from Bermudas for his education, was a most diligent student, made great proficiency, and came out a bright preacher. Both of them were ordained in our house, and were about the same age, (thirty-five).

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I had,

I had, however, no hand in publishing this sermon. The congregation chose Mr. Smith to be their pastor, but he declines the cure for want of health, and I hear they have sent to London.

Your book of hymns is reprinted here, in a handsome manner for us; not one yet bound. Your guide to prayer is going into the press. Enclosed is half an ounce of gold.

L E T T E R III.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Boston, Aug. 20, 1739.

I HAVE your new and great favour of June 6th, with your packets for Harward and Gale college, which I have forwarded. My last to you was a packet by capt. Marrier, which he promised to see delivered at your friend's house, near the Exchange; in it was half an ounce of gold, in rings, to pay for your kind advance of Mrs. Rowe's first volume, and her pictures, to me, with which you greatly obliged me. Please to reserve enough of the said money to pay for the whole subscription to Dr. Dodderidge's volumes, if you have not done it before; and as I have left it to you to buy me what pleases you best with what is left of my money, so I readily suppose you will send me the discourses of preaching Christ, which the prints tell

tell me you desire always to have at your right hand.

Mr. President Williams has been followed this year with a dreadful head-ach, which has greatly endangered the loss of his sight, but through the favour of God he is much restored, yet often thinks he must leave New Haven, and live farther from the sea air, to which he imputes the pains of his head, finding them return with the bleak sea winds. He is a most valuable man, and his sickness or retirement would be a great loss to us.

Our dear Mr. Mather has also suffered much this year and last by sickness; with great constancy he went through much incision on his face, and is now recovering from a slow burning fever, very distressing. I preached for him last week, and found *the world to come* on his table, but his eyes not able then to look into it.

How much do I rejoice, my dear brother, in your recovery, so far as to write again at large to your friends, and to send us new fruits of your labour. We are a great expence to you from year to year, and I am ready to blush at the great charge you are put to by your correspondence here with so many of us; but you gladly spend, and are spent, for the benefit of many, at home and abroad. The Lord render you a full reward in the comfort of your soul, for its travel for us, in the way to your crown.

How

How pleasant is it to see you finishing your course with the present subject, The World to come ! The End of Time ! The Watchful Christian, &c. and how pleasant also is it to receive your promise, by the will of God, of more on the same head : a harvest to you, I trust, living and dying. You do well to wear and work out, and come to your grave as a shock of corn in its season. And I thank God, who strengthens your hands, and encourages your heart, by the very great acceptance he gives to your works, which I read with pleasure, in the account of the multiplied editions of them. This last year, at my motion, two of our booksellers reprinted your songs for children, an edition of two or three thousand, I think ; and your hymns are just now out of the press, and your treatise of prayer in it. I know not whether you reckon our editions here any thing, but we do.

There is a motion lately come to us at Boston, from the presbitery from Pennsylvania and New York, for a new college to be built in those parts, the churches there multiplying, and the people finding it so far from home, to send their children to Yale, which is next to them : but the rumours of war will be like to retard this great affair ; for as we here have promised them our assistance, so
they

they propose to send over one of their number to London or Edinburgh.

The Essay on Civil Power, in Things sacred, I take to be your own, by the preface and two first sections. I think what is said, sect. iii. to be absolutely necessary to the being of a christian state, and that the laws of a land should enjoin strictly and peremptorily the worship, and swearing by the one and only Lord God; and that they that deny him, and would swear by any idol god, should not be acknowledged as subjects of the state. I cannot think there may be heathens, serving several gods, and yet useful members of a state: they must be dreadful snares and pests to the places where they dwell, and fatal to them, as God warned his Israel of old. I fear also the appointment and support of preachers of natural religion, and the laws of the land, with a command to people to attend them, and on the Lord's day in particular, would soon turn out the requisite sanctification of it in private and public: if one day rather, the first of each term, from county to county, were the times assigned for people's information, methinks it would better serve the end proposed; yet not so fully I acknowledge; neither is this information so necessary as preaching the word of life to their souls. The honour of the Lord's day, and means of grace, forbids the intrusion of other
authorised,

authorised, civil and moral public teachers. Our government have lately recommended to ministers to read a very pious proclamation for the better observation of the Lord's day, which I gladly did; but some of our churches here would not come into it: the brethren in one of them spoke openly against it, and prevented it, with the liking I fear of the pastor, when he however proposed it. There would presently be an end of religion, if the sacredness of the sabbath be not kept up and maintained.

Sect. vi. &c. seem to leave things too base, and give room to unsettle what God has settled. The rights of government itself, and so the liberties of the people, must be judged of by the word of God, and submitted to it. There is no light in us but by this law; we do well to take heed to it as a light that shines in a dark place; the rights of conscience are best judged of by it; the magistrate is to govern, and the subject to obey by scripture light, which is for conscience sake toward God. We are as much the people of God, by our profession of the gospel, rulers and ruled, as the Jews were. We are a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people; to these, &c. believers are so truly, the professor declares it of himself. The Romish apostacy is only a defection from, and rebellion against this royal and perfect law of liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God;

bound up by the divine will, just as all heaven and angels are.

I thank you, Sir, for the other essay, Self-love and Virtue reconciled only by Religion, which the catalogue gives leave to ascribe to you. The argument in the whole of it appears to me strong and right, and of great importance.

I return to your End of Time, &c. I think you never wrote, nor did I ever read discourses more adapted to young and old, high and low. In such flame one would wish to expire: I am ready to say on it, "It is finished! Yet may you live to add more."

Our ships of war are fitting out for the Spanish coast. War will break our correspondence by the caption of letters and packets: it may be my last to you may not have arrived, with the gold in it, I pray you to advise me that I may not lie in debt.

My weak heart misgives me, when I think of our own divisions, and the united powers of Spain and France. If our God and Saviour were not so dreadfully neglected and defied, more were with us than with them. I fear a swarm of privateers upon our merchandise, and the transport of popery across the channel, or round about, in the person of —: but God has not forsaken us in times past though we always him.

I sent you the vote of our court, in form of a brief. We have had our collections in part, and find

find we shall have monies. Our congregation contributed eighty pounds. Connecticut gave some hundreds. A great many five and six pounds will make a sum. We are proposing the surplus for a foundation of a fund, for the support of the gospel in poor places in all times to come. Please to inform Mr. Holden that I hope we shall not again lie in debt to him.

I entreat you, Sir, to inform me by the first opportunity, of the foundation of your London fund, and how it is supported and endowed, by whom, and to whom, and what account is rendered of it to the contributors. We would form ourselves by you. I depend on Drs. Harris, Guyse and you, to give me the information and direction that may be necessary. I have promised our churches to ask it of you.

We were obliged to drop our motion by an adjournment, *sine die*, about using a new version of the psalms, finding our peace endangered. Mr. Cooper has not effected this version in above twenty psalms, I think.

The heat of summer has revived me; the cool of autumn I now feel, Sept. 22. I missed one ship after I had wrote the other pages, which has brought me to this date.

Mercy and peace be with you. Salute my dear friends. Their and your prayers I ask. We have a long coast on the sea; abundance of great and
small

small craft with merchandise and provifions, and a vast border of new feeble towns along our inland woods ; a natural fortification for the Indians, East and West, all frenchified and popish : may the Lord God of our fathers be a wall of fire round about us.

We can never fortify ourselves without breaking in upon the king's instructions and prohibition to our government about emission of bills ; we must fortify immediately or we betray the king's province into the hands of his enemies. I have dared, for once, to say to the Governor, " As God dispensed with his first and perpetual law, in cases of necessity and mercy, verily our good king will with his instructions and order on so apparent, instant, and urgent a necessity." The government has, from year to year, told the court of our wretched condition ; but neither would they petition the king to remit, as to his instruction, for a limited sum of thirty thousand pounds *per annum*, nor could the governor dare to raise more than just to defray the annual charges of the government ; nor could he alone bear the charge of obtaining the king's leave, not a letter being able to get to Whitehall without too many guineas for a private purse. But I must break off and subscribe, dear Sir, your brother and servant,

BENJ. COLMAN.

From

From Lady HARTFORD to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

March 4, 1744-5.

SINCE the heavy calamity with which it has pleased God to visit me, I have not felt a more sensible gleam of pleasure than on Saturday last, when I received your letter accompanied with your excellent book ; I have read two of the sermons which (like all your other writings) have a peculiar spirit of piety in them, which must awaken something of a sympathetic warmth in the most lethargic soul. Mine is much depressed by the loss of a son, who, while he lived, was the balm of every disappointment and vexation that assailed me; and, as I believe, no son of mere human parents was ever more truly virtuous and deserving, so I think none was ever more tenderly beloved. I am afraid he was too much the pride and joy of my heart; yet, if an excess in this kind could ever be excusable, his uncommon duty and constant affection might have pleaded for it. When he found himself dying, he declared he submitted with cheerfulness to the will of God, as his conscience did not reproach him, and he trusted his errors would be forgiven; and added, that his only sorrow in leaving

ing this world was to think of the pangs which he knew would rend the hearts of his unhappy parents when they should receive the news.

But, I hope, I do not repine at this dispensation, though my flesh trembles beneath the rod, since, if I know the secrets of my own soul, I durst not ask to have this darling child alive again though I were sure to have my request immediately granted. He is removed from the numerous temptations to vice which his rank in life, joined to the advantages of his fortune and person, might have exposed him to, and can never know nor need such an affliction as constrains me to shed almost incessant tears notwithstanding the sense I have of the mercy, as well as justice of this decree of unerring Wisdom. This often adds to the burthen I labour under, as it shows me too clearly the imperfection both of my resignation and faith. It is true the tenderest band which held me to the earth is dissolved, but I have still many duties to practise, though, I am afraid, the weight which hangs upon my heart hinders me from performing them with the chearfulness I ought, though I think I exert myself to the utmost I am able. In this distressed condition let me beg your earnest prayers, that the God of peace and comfort may let his light shine upon my soul, and, according to his promise, give rest to me who am weary and heavy

laden with sin and sorrow, and who am entirely convinced of the vanity and impotence of all worldly assistance. My lord, I bless God, enjoys a tolerable degree of health, and my daughter (with both her children) is well; she joins with her father in assurances of their regard for you.

I am very glad to hear that you are recovering such a share of health as I hope will make the remainder of your days comfortable, and enable you to go on doing good by your writings and example. I am at present disordered with a slow fever which preys upon my strength and spirits, but I imagine that the air and quiet of the country, where I hope to be in about three weeks, will remove this complaint. I am, with real esteem, Sir, your most faithful and obliged servant,

HARTFORD.

P. S. I take the liberty to send you a Poem, which if you have not seen, may perhaps afford you an hour's amusement.

L E T T E R II.

REV. SIR,

Percy-Lodge, Nov. 15, 1747.

THE last time I troubled you with a letter, was to return you thanks on the Glory of Christ, a subject which can never be exhausted, or ever thought of

of without calling for all the praise which our hearts are capable of in our present imperfect state. My gratitude to you is again awakened by the obligation I am under (and, indeed, the whole christian church) to you for giving Dr. Doddridge the plan, and engaging him to write his excellent book of the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul; I have read it with the utmost attention and pleasure, and, I would hope with some advantage to myself, unless I should be so unhappy as to find the impression it has made on my heart wear off like the morning dew which passeth away, which God in his mercy avert.

If I have a correspondence with him, I could wish you would convey my thanks to him, and the assurance that I shall frequently remember him in my humble (though weak) addresses to the throne of Almighty Grace, (and which I know myself unworthy to look up to any otherwise than through the merits and sufferings of our ever blessed Saviour) that he may go on to spread the knowledge and practice of his doctrine, and that he may add numbers to the church, and finally hear those blessed words, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into thy Master's joy."

I cannot help mentioning to you the manner of this book falling into my hands, as I think there was something providential in it. About four months

ago my poor lord had so totally lost his appetite, that his physicians thought it necessary for him to go to the Bath, I was not a moment in doubt whether I should attend him there, because I knew it was my duty, and besides I could not have been easy to be absent when I hoped my care might be of some use: yet I undertook the journey with a weight upon my spirits, and a reluctance which is not to be described, though I concealed it from him. Since the great affliction with which it pleased Almighty God to visit me by the death of a most valuable and only son, I found myself happiest in almost an entire retreat from the world; and being of a sudden called into a place where I remembered to have seen the utmost of its hurry and vanity exerted, terrified my imagination to the last degree, and I shed tears every time I was alone, at the thoughts of what I expected to encounter; yet this dreaded change has by the goodness of God proved one of the happiest periods in my life, and I can look back upon no part of it with greater thankfulness and satisfaction. I had the comfort to see my lord Hartford recovering his health by the use of those waters, as fast as I could hope for. I found it was no longer necessary (as formerly, to avoid giving offence) to be always or frequently in company; I enjoyed the conversation of two worthy old friends whom I did
not

not expect to meet there ; and had an opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with Lady Huntingdon, and admiring that truly christian spirit which seems to animate the whole course of her life ; and as I seldom went out, I read a great deal, and Frederick the bookseller used to send me the new books which he received on the waggon nights, of which I kept what I chose, and sent back the rest. One night he sent me the account of some remarkable passages relating to the Life of Colonel Gardiner ; as I had known this gentleman in his unconverted state, and often heard with admiration the sudden and thorough change of his conduct, for many years, it gave me a curiosity to read a book which seemed to promise me some information upon that subject. I was so touched with the account given of it, that I could not help speaking of it to almost every body I saw ; among others, the dowager lady Hyndford came to make me a visit in the morning, and as I knew she was of his country and had lived much in it, I begun to talk to her of the book, and happened to name the author. Upon which she said she would believe whatever he wrote, for he was a truly good man, and had wrote upon the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul, in a manner which she was sure would please me. She gave me the title in writing, and I bought the

book the day before I left Bath. I have now been at home three weeks, and have already had the pleasure to engage several others to read it, who I hope will think of it as I do. I would wish to trouble you to write to me yourself, but a letter from your amanuensis to let me know how you enjoy your health, and whether you are still carrying on some work of your pen, to the glory of our great Master, would be a very sincere pleasure to me. Let me beg to be remembered in your prayers, for I am every day more sensible of the imperfection of my own, and yet I hope my heart is sincere in its desire that it may be brought to a perfect conformity and submission to the will of my heavenly Father.

My lord Hartford always mentions you with regard, and will be glad of your acceptance of the assurance of his friendship. I am, with an affectionate esteem, Sir, your most faithful and obliged humble servant,

HARTFORD.

From

From Mr. JAMES PETTIT to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

December, 1728.

THE bookseller has promised me another set of Poems, so that if you think them worth a place in your library be pleased to accept them; I never could relish French poetry; so many words, and so very few thoughts; sometimes one flat conceit spun into six or seven tedious lines, which is intolerable: I love just the contrary, a great deal of good, deep, nervous sense, crowded into a few emphatical words; this is brightly exemplified in these Poems, where almost every line surprizes with a new beautiful thought, and inimitably devout, and have some reason to believe them more than human compositions.

I shewed your letter to my sisters, they liked it extremely well, are of your opinion, and said it was their own sentiments expressed.

I differ a little from you upon the heads of idolatry, enthusiasm, sabbath-days, sacraments, christian perfection, millenium, eternity of hell torments, and original sin! which, as taught by the church, is Adam's transgression, derived from

him, and coming down to every particular man, as imputed guilt.

Now, this is a doctrine so shocking to all my rational powers, reflecting so much dishonour upon the attributes of God, that was it in every page of the Bible, as I am sure it is in one; was an angel from heaven to preach it I could not believe it: if I that am evil, would not impute one servant's fault to another, much less will an infinitely wise and good God. Our protestant divines have built so much upon this false foundation, that I sincerely believe they have given great occasion to the deism of the present age, at least they have given them a handle of invincible triumph.

As I take it, it is the universal consent of the orthodox, that Adam's imputed guilt, and Christ's imputed righteousness, must stand and fall together. Now, were I viciously inclined (as I believe vice is the foundation of all deism) I would throw off my religion, and glory that I could prove that maxim of imputed guilt demonstrably false, and consequently the other must fall; but I see no manner of connection between them, Christ's imputed righteousness is a noble, glorious doctrine, which I believe, and upon which I entirely depend, well knowing there is no other robe wherein God's children can appear lovely in his eyes but imputed guilt.

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An enlightened man that knows what guilt is, has no words to express the horror of the thought. I have lived a life comparatively innocent, but I have too much of omission and commission to be pardoned, not to bring in Adam's (and you may truly put in Herod's and Nero's) to inflame the account.

I am very well aware that there are two or three texts in the fifth of Romans which seem to look that way, and upon which, I suppose, the whole doctrine is built; and I really believe St. Peter had that chapter in his thoughts when he said, "Our dearly beloved brother Paul writes some few things hard to be understood." But I do not content myself with such a notion, I have a very good sense of the words, which is perfectly satisfactory to me, though I do not expect it should be so to any one else. I will tell you how I understand these texts, (not in a dictating way) but only to shew you that I entertain no sentiment that I think inconsistent with any part of the New Testament.

Romans v. 12, 18 and 19, these I take to be parallel texts, and the meaning of them, in a few words, to be, that as every individual man, in his pre-existing state, by his own voluntary act and deed lost his original innocence, so God set up Adam as a common head by whom sin should be introduced

introduced to this world. This (I repeat it) is not said to teach you, who I have reason to believe are very well versed in the spiritual, hidden, mystical sense of the Bible, and I am fully persuaded that there are innumerable texts that have vast depths of divine sense yet unfathomed, which the vulture's eye hath not yet seen, nor are the wisest and best men yet able fully to explain them ; and it is a very great joy to my soul when I can discern any new ray of that sort of light. I suppose that a minister, whose life has been employed in theological studies, and who has been so long conversant with fathers and bodies of divinity as you have been, must have his mind unavoidably tinged with their articles of creed, and the better a man is, the more apt he is to contract a reverential resignation for things he too easily esteems sacred. But whereinfoever you and I differ, I am sure we both agree in referring all to Jesus the judge ; I firmly trust that we both hold the head, even an incarnate God, the Lamb that was slain, who is worthy of everlasting adoration, worship and love, to whom I pray that he may be your almighty friend, your infallible guide, the constant companion of your life, and when this short life is ended, your everlasting portion and exceeding great reward. I am, with great respect, your most humble servant,

J. PETTIT.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

REVEREND SIR,

January, 1729.

I MUST write to you once more, though I am sensible your hands (or rather your head and your heart) are always full of important business, so that you have something else to do besides answering letters; therefore if you will favour me with one more, I promise you this shall be my last; wherein, dismissing all controversies (of which religion are the worst) I will tell you my sentiments of prayer and devotion: in your writings you have liberally distributed of that treasure wherewith God has inwardly enriched you, and though I can say nothing but what is faint in comparison, yet if I can excite you to write something that may advance me in the ways of God, I shall gain my end.

I think the most natural division of prayer is, into central and sensible, the central nothing can destroy but a deliberate act of known sin, which one that is born of God cannot (not physically, as a man may thrust his hand into the fire if he will, but morally) commit; but the sensible, what wide breaches; days spent in business, nights in sleep: I have been long fully convinced that every minute void of devotion is a lost minute; and, I

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am sure, there is not a moment of a christian's life (except sleep) inconsistent with a fixed view of God and Jesus Christ; this is certainly (I speak it with modesty) a fine speculation. But, how arduous the attempt, how desirable the progress, how unspeakably noble and happy the attainment; but, how difficult the enemy without, and the more dangerous enemy within, and especially the principalities and powers above level all their fiery darts against a praying soul, so that every christian's situation is hazardous and melancholy, and they sadly feel the truth of what you have wisely said, "that it is all winter here;" perpetual prayer is strongly urged in many places of the Psalms and New Testament even literally, but mystically in texts without number.

This is what Solomon exhorts us to pursue, when he displays the beauties of wisdom; this is the fire on the altar that never goes out; the kingdom of God within us; the pearl of great price; and the treasure hid in the field of solitude. This is the river of living water flowing out of him that believes, the well springing to eternal life; the white stone; the new name; the hidden manna; the seal on the forehead; and (to name no more, supposing you know them much better than I) the path which the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's foot trod; and it is most certainly true, that

the finest orator at the bar cannot pray to God with such apt expressions as a devout, though an illiterate old man or woman, which shews it to be a science of divine inspiration; and, indeed, a man can have nothing of this nature but what is given him from above.

Lord teach us to pray; happy the man to whom God grants this heavenly request, and makes him joyful in the inward house of prayer; this is sabbath, sacraments and all. It was for the love of prayer (not fear of persecution) that holy men of old (who wanted to be alone with God) retired to caves and dens of the earth, of whom the world was not worthy. I admire the unsearchable depths of the wisdom and love of God, when I read one of the most finished characters in the Bible, given to a man as yet a heathen. Cornelius, a devout man, fearing God, giving much alms, praying always. I am apt to think that God calls every particular man in a path peculiar to himself, which would not suit any other person, and that he inspires his faithful servants with secret impulses by which he enlightens, enlivens, enflames their souls, and instructs by the unction of his holy spirit, so that they have no need of any outward teacher; he calls some to a course of mortification and self-denial; others spend their whole lives under a continual sense of God's immediate presence,
and

and thereby have all their graces and pious affections maintained in a lively exercise; others live in constant holy raptures, (such as Bonne Armelle) transported with divine love, receiving hourly new and fresh evidence of God's love to them, and returning back to God vows of eternal fidelity; some he calls to the service of the church, and crowns the labours of others with a sabbath of rest and contemplation in this life: happy the man that is faithful to the divine attraction, and that abides with God in his inward calling, our Lord Jesus Christ, "that great pattern of the saints, (as you stiled him when I heard you last) was a man of uninterrupted prayer and praise day and night, sleeping and waking;" and when it is said, "He went into a mountain and continued all night in the prayer of God," (as I take it) it was not spoke only of that night but of every night and every hour, for every action of his life was done in the moment of eternity, and he was always upon the mountain of divine prayer.

A man that loves and prays may do what he will, for he can will nothing amiss; such a man will make it his whole study how he shall walk before God in all the strictness of an innocent life, how he shall exercise himself in all the duties of his holy religion, how he may render himself amiable in the eyes of God, and may avoid every thing
that

that may in the least offend him ; such a man thinks it a joyful (rather than an awful) thought that God searches the heart and sees our most secret imaginations, and he is never so happy as when remote from every human eye and ear, he can freely pour out his soul in rapid prayer to that God whose eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears always open to their cry, and who understands the language which words cannot utter ; may this be your and my hourly delightful practice till our imperfect prayers be changed into triumphant praises, and we never cease saying, "Holy ! Holy ! Holy ! unto him that loved us and washed us from sin in his own blood be eternal glory !"

I wish you unwearied constancy and increasing advances in that path of perfection you have made so great progress in, and all possible happiness, temporal, spiritual, and eternal ; and am, your most obedient humble servant,

J. PETTIT.

Isaiah xxxiii. 7. I believe this is spoken of the angels weeping bitterly while our Lord hung upon the cross, as the context in ver. 5. plainly shews, and I think it a noble testimony to the solemn pomp of the passion.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

REV. SIR,

December 3, —.

AS I have told you that I admire your book (which I sincerely do) so I cannot forbear hinting something wherein I do not so exactly agree with you, I think you are too severe upon the poor ignorant Roman catholics, who kiss a crucifix in testimony of devotion; which (when done with a temper of mind corresponding to the outward action) I think worthy the highest commendation, considering that the love of the sacred humanity of Jesus, is the most natural guide to the practice of all virtue, and perfectly level to the capacity of the vulgar; your own thoughts will suggest more upon this head, to illustrate my sentiments, than I can say myself. And then you are still harder upon the head of Romish enthusiasts, who you represent as appearing more like furies than christians: this is so unlike good Mr. Watts, who, I am sure, is full of that charity that thinks no evil, and believeth all things, that I account for it by supposing it to be an obliging deference to the opinion of an auditory, averse to popery, and which upon second thoughts you yourself may judge a little too harsh. As to the Romish religion, I esteem it the worst in the world, a complication of folly

folly and wickedness; but to my astonishment I have found that God has raised up amongst them such examples of sublime devotion, fervent charity, strict temperance; such men, whose days were spent in unwearied obedience, and their nights in uninterrupted prayer and contemplation, that of them it might be said, that they lived the religion of Jesus, that they brought heaven down to earth, that their life of Christ was manifest in their mortal bodies, and that they stood complete in the whole will of their God. I may guess that you had in your thoughts Sir Francis or St. Anthony, who to the eyes of the world appeared ridiculous and distracted, but they were inwardly inflamed, and the love of God was in their hearts like a fire shut up in their bones; I often wonder that pious and devout men do not commit (what the world would call) greater extravagancies, such as speaking aloud the name of Jesus in the streets before they were aware, which I think would be a natural result of that infinite fund of love, and bank of devotion, they feel in their breasts; indeed, when men lift up their eye balls with a design to deceive, this is mean and contemptible beyond the reach of words, but when I see any man do so I never suspect him, because I think it an unavoidable effect of an elevated soul, and because the world rather treat such a man with

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laughter

laughter and scorn than encourage him to affect and dissemble a religious exterior. I would not have sent this if I had not been sure (from what I know of you) that you would take it in good part. I write it in simplicity, and not in the spirit of reproof and finding fault, for I look upon you as one anointed with the Holy Ghost, whom I believe God has made a spiritual father to many an heir of heaven, and to whom I am well assured Jesus will say, "Well done good and faithful servant."

Take not this as a compliment, for flattery I abhor.

I have sent the three other volumes of Poems; your sentiments of them would be acceptable to your humble servant,

J. PETTIT.

From

From Mr. EDWARD CAVE to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

REVEREND SIR,

St. John's Gate, Dec. 16, 1734.

AS a stranger I ought to make some apology for giving you this trouble; but your goodnature will excuse my presumption, and your known attachment to the Belles Lettres is encouragement enough to expect your attention to what is offered you by one who is a well-wisher to the sciences.

The undertaker of the Gentleman's Magazine, a monthly book, which you have possibly heard of (I dare not presume it has merit enough to deserve a place in your library) for the entertainment of his readers, and as a spur to ingenuity, annually proposes a subject to exercise the wits of the age, and to spirit emulation, annexes a prize to the best performances. The first subject of this kind he offered the public was, on Her Majesty's Grotto, and the poems wrote thereon were inserted in several magazines in the year 1733, and published in a separate pamphlet, called The Contest; and the prizes were adjudged according to the impartial opinion of some gen-

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tllemen who were so kind as to undertake that office.

The subject given out for a prize for the year 1734, was Astronomy. Four poems have been wrote upon it, which you will find, p. 503, 562, 563, 564; and the prize being to be determined this month, three of the writers, the fourth is unknown to us, unanimously refer the decision to your judgment and determination, declaring their entire satisfaction in your opinion, to whomsoever it shall give the preference; only please to observe, there are two degrees of merit; the first is entitled to the best prize, the other to the second best. If you will be so good as to comply with their request, they will esteem it as a peculiar favour, and you will also hereby oblige him, who is, with true respect, and very great esteem, your humble servant,

EDW. CAVE.

L E T T E R II.

REVEREND SIR,

St. John's Gate, March 11, 1735.

I Am commissioned by the gentlemen, who are candidates for the prize, to return you their most grateful acknowledgments for the pains you have so kindly taken, in discussing their respective claims. They did not expect so learned and critical

tical a dissertation on their several pieces, whose merit, they imagined, was far from entitling them to so great an honour. But since you have condescended, in so polite and candid a manner to examine their several pretensions to the prize, it is the least part of their gratitude to declare their unanimous satisfaction in your opinion of their deserts, and accordingly have amicably adjusted the difference betwixt themselves.

With regard to what you have added in the postscript to your letter, I must allow, Sir, there has been too much reason for the censure you have passed on the Magazine; but it shall be my future care to let nothing pass of that kind, and to convince the world I am much better pleased with ingenuity of a more serious turn, I have proposed a considerable reward for poems on five sublime subjects; on which, if it suited your leisure, and you have not taken an absolute leave of the Muses, I should be proud of a poem from Dr. Watts.

I must own myself tardy in not paying you my respects till now; but multiplicity of business, and a great deal of illness has been the reason, which I trust your goodness will take as an excuse for a neglect not intended by your very humble servant,

EDW. CAVE.

From the Bishop of YORK to Dr. WATTS.

REV. SIR, Downing-street, Westminster, Oct. 16, 1739.

I Have received your favour of the 10th of this month, and have great pleasure in observing, that my small benevolence to Mr. Leland will be doubled to the good man by your leave to find its way to him through the hands of so good and valuable a friend.

On that account also it is, that I take the liberty to ask the further favour of knowing from you, if the good man's papers have escaped the flames, and that we may yet hope to see the reply which we have heard he was preparing to a second volume, not long since published by the shameless enemy of the person and doctrine of our blessed Saviour.

May the good God of heaven and earth support and assist us all in our just endeavours to repel, with vigour, the virulent and impious assaults on the whole fabrick of our common faith; and to detect, with temper, the fallacious and unmanly arts employed by the modern adversaries of our holy religion, with a degree of boldness and inveteracy,

teracy, not to be equalled by those of any age that I have read of since the days of Julian the Apostate.

Give me leave to return to you in kind all your good wishes to me, together with the true esteem and sincere respect of, reverend Sir, your faithful and obliged humble servant,

LAU. EBOR.

From G. A. FRANCKIUS, S. P. D. to Dr. WATTS.

L E T T E R I.

LITTERAS, quas ad me dedisti, vir reverende, animi amicissimi significationibus refertas, una cum munere librorum & æris longe gratissimo recte accepi, & eo quidem lætior, quo minus hæc omnia expectata venerunt : qua de re & certiore te quam primum facere decrevi, & gratias simul agere pro eo ac decet quam maximas. Declarasti hac ratione quanti apud te fierent illa opera parente pie instituta, & a me ope immortalis Dei suffulto adhuc continuata. Singulare imprimis mihi gaudium attulit, quod intellexi illas fiduciæ & spei in Deo opt. max. collocatæ rationes, quas & b. parens sectatus est, & ego amplector perquam proh dolor! his nostris temporibus ignotas, adeo tibi probari, teque eodem fidei spiritu totum inflammatum agi. Exinde enim evenisse arbitror, ut b. parentem quoad vixit amantissime coleres, & ejusdem obitum graviter lugeres, tuasque lacrimas, ut scribis, cum nostris misceres, uti ex illa doloris societate aliquid, quod fieri solet, consolationis caperemus. Audiat Deus vota precesque, quas pro incolumitate

& incrementis rei divinæ & in universo terrarum orbe & inter nos inprimis, fudisti ardentissimas. Averruncet pro summa, qua suos fouet, benignitate mala, quæ ecclesiæ imminet quotidie, contra vero felicitatem illius magis in dies magisque efflorescere & perennare jubeat, eique plures Watsios, & si amanter mavis Augustos Hermannos Franckios suscitet, per quos emolumentis illius consulat. Quorum veterum fore ut rei reddamur, neutiquam dubito, innumeris enim iisque luculentissimis speciminibus per illud tempus, quod post mortem b. parentis effluxit, cognovimus, curæ cordique nos Deo nostro esse, quare jam audentiores facti in posterum eadem quid quod majora expectabimus.

Libri quos amoris tui documenta transmisisti te scriptore dignissimos, bibliothecæ orphanotrophei decus insigne tuique nominis summam venerationem apud lecturos conciliabunt. Licet enim illis sermonibus sacris de statu animarum post mortem, qui in germanicam linguam translati ante biennium apud nos prodierunt, & ex quibus b. parens brevi ante mortem lectis ingentem delectationem cepit, nominis celebritatem sis consecutus, illam tamen vehementer auctum iri confido, si in bibliotheca nostra publica & reliquorum tuorum laborum usura omnibus concedetur.

Nobiliss. Hollisium meis verbis valere quam rectissime & feliciter agere jubeto. Quod reliquum
est

est tuo amori, benevolentiae & sanctiori inter deprecandum recordationi me, measque rationes omnes, quas quod ad communis nostri Domini causam pertinent, & tuas appello, vehementer etiam atque etiam commendo. Si quæ a me in te officia proficisci poterunt, non committam profecto ut aliquid expectetur aut postuletur, quod in viribus meis positum erit, in quo non expectationem tuam superare annitur. Multum salutatus a Collegis meis, quibus ex illo libro de quo supra mentionem feci, satis innotuisti, iterum iterumque vale.—Dabam Halae, die 3. Id. Octobr. Anno 1728.

L E T T E R II.

SERIOUS, vir reverende, ad nos accessit Manitius noster, cui litteras tuas ad me perferendas tradidisti, quippe quas, sexto atque vicesimo Aprilis die scriptas, ante sex demum hebdomades mihi reddidit; libellorum deinde fasciculus post integri fere mensis spatium adferebatur. Quam ob causam, præsertim cum aliquot tibi munuscula vicissim transmittenda viderentur, non miraberis, vir reverende, quod nunc demum litteris tuis rescribam.

Primum ergo tibi, ut debeo, gratias ago, quas possum, maximas cum de favore tuo, quem erga me

me atque orphano-tropheum nostrum luculenter demonstraſti ; tum de libellis, quos olim, quosque nuper denuo muneri orphanotropheo miſiſti. Quid? quod reperi etiam adpoſitos quinque aureos, atque adeo multis me tibi nominibus obſtrictum eſſe intellexi.

Ceterum omnes iſti præſtantes ingenii tui foetus in bibliotheca orphanotrophei noſtri ſervantur; illum vero, quem de morte & cælo conſcripſiſti, & qui vernacula noſtra ante aliquot annos prodiit, iterum nunc typis eſſe divulgatum ſcias. Quod ad meditationes tuas de emendandis Chriſtianorum rebus attinet, id apud nos agitur, ut potiora ex illis momenta ſpeciatiim notentur, & recenſionibus eorum, quæ ad ſtabiliendum Dei regnum ſpectant, (vulgo, den Sammlungen zum Bau des Reiches Gottes) interſerantur. Ex tribus brevioribus ſcriptis præcipue laudem meretur Domini Jenningsii Tractatus, quo de prædicando Jeſu Chriſto & orationibus ſacris ad pietatis exercitium recte dirigendis, egregie commentatus eſt, quæ commentatio integra memoratis recenſionibus interſeretur. Omnis ſane pietatis atque ſalutis cardo in ſalvatoris noſtri cognitione recta verſatur: quare academiæ noſtræ parentes, οἱ γὰρ ἐν ἀγίοις id ſemper egerunt, ut ſalutari ſoſpitoris cognitione auditorum animos imbuerent, atque eandem nobis quoque provinciam præcipue demandatum eſſe arbitramur, quotquot
in

in vinea Domini adhuc operamur & animas Christo lucrari allaboramus. Neque minus vero lætamur, quod in Anglia quoque sint, qui eandem sibi metam præfixerunt. Efficit præterea humanitas tua, vir Doctissime, ut ea, quæ cum a B. parente meo, tum a me Latine scripta sunt, transmittere nullus dubitem. Spero enim fore, ut studium tibi nostrum haud displiceat. At vero, libri plane non compacti tibi offeruntur. Sed facile mihi, confido, ignosces, quandoquidem nostrorum opificum operam iis voluminibus, quæ apud vos compinguntur, longe postponendam esse satis constar, mihiq; significatum est, ægre in Angliam admitti libros alibi terrarum compactos: quam ob rem cavendum esse duco, ne qua molestia tibi adferatur. In libello isto, qui de Christo scripturæ nucleo agit, appendix habetur, quo non nulla de Apostolica Christi cognitione exponuntur, e quibus, quid B. parens meus de Christi cognitione statuerit, facile intelligi possunt. Prodiit ejusdem epistola *vom erbaulichen predigen*, sive de orationibus sacris ita habendis, ut ad *σικοδομήν* omnia referantur. Jussi hanc epistolam, ut a te legi possit, in Latinam linguam transferri: quam interpretationem, in præsentia nondum absolutam, simulatque fieri potest, etiam tibi perferendam curabo. Non quidem accuratius utrumque elaboratum est, sed familiaris tantum sermonis habitus est cum in hoc, tum in illo

illo scripto : varia tamen, quibus delecteris, quæque ad tuam & Domini Jenningsii mentem plane sunt adcommodata, in utroque reperiri mihi videntur. Quod reliquum est, Manitium, supra nominatum, postquam per aliquot hebdomades apud nos fuit, ad oberrantes & domo Israelis oves revivendas nuper iam hinc discessisse scito. Vale, vir reverende, vale per summi numinis virtutem, quæ vires tuas senectute attenuatas ita roboret, ut in multos adhuc annos ipsi vivere possis. Precibus tuis, quoad hac aura vesceris, habeas me commendatum, atque ita tibi persuadeas, me nominis tui immemorem haud esse futurum. Collegæ mei omnem tibi salutem vicissim adprecantur. Scripsi Halæ, d. 15 Septembr. 1735.

L E T T E R I I I.

LITTERÆ tuæ, quas 23 Febr. exarasti, vir reverende, perlatæ quidem ad me sunt : multitudine autem laborum meorum evenit, us nihil huc usque ad illas responderim. Tandem officio meo nolui diutius deesse, confisus, diuturnum silentium in meliorem partem te esse interpretaturum. Scias itaque dulcem mihi fuisse epistolam tuam, ex illa cognoscenti, voluminibus, quæ nuper transmissa a me sunt, te non modo delectatum esse, sed opera
tua

tua etiam accidisse, ut Dn. Jenningsius, quem meo nomine vicissim salutatum velim, illam parentis mei de sacris orationibus epistolam anglice interpretandam suscepit. Spero enim fore, saltem ex animo pretor, ut ex hoc qualicunque opusculo fructum aliquem capiant ingenui lectores. De libello, quem litteris tuis adjunxisti, gratias tibi ago, eumque libris orphanotrophei nostri adnumeratum esse; istum vero, quem de morte & cælo ipse conscripsisti, iterum jam vernacula nostra publice exscribi atque divulgari, scire te vole; ex quo adparet habere labores tuos fructum aliquem, quo læteris. Ceterum adversam quidem valetudinem tuam, qua diu multumque laborare significas, doleo; confido tamen, sempiternam mortalitatis memoriam menti salutarem fuisse, & quicquid tibi voluptatis per corporis dolores detractum est, id salvatoris nostri vulneribus mille modis restitutum esse; simulque precor, ut hæc litteras legens, dudum jam convalesceris, &, si Deo visum fuerit, magis magisque confirmatus, complures annos in gregis tui commodum vinas & vigeas. Vale, scripsi Halae d. 23 Oct. 1736.

L E T T E R IV.

REVERENDI Ziegenhagenii litteris relatum legi, vir reverende, quod denuo munificentiae tuæ in orphanotropeum nostrum aliquod extare volueris

ris documentum. Proinde non possum non, quin tibi gratum & obstrictum tester animum meum, & largissimam Dei O. M. compensationem adprec- cer. Scias quoque, pecuniam istam ex isto ære, quod pro Indis ad Christum covertendis missum a nobis servatur, orphanotropheo solutam esse; Rev. Ziegenhagenium vero eandem, quam a te accepit, ad summam istam, quæ per Angliam ad Indos mittitur, retulisse. Præterea gratias tibi quoque habeo de epistola tua quam 12 Aprilis die scriptam his demum diebus accepi. Significas enim parentis mei epistolam de sermonibus sacris recte habendis, quam-plurimos in Anglia habere amatores. Est hoc, quod merito gaudeam, quia res Domini sine dubio aliquod inde incrementum est perceptura. Cum epistolam hanc tibi trans- mitterem, vir reverende, mentionem quoque feci scripti illius, quo parens meus *de cognitione Christi* pauca differuit. Addita est ejus interpretatio La- tina commentationi *de Christo Scripturæ nucleo*, quæ haud ita pridem etiam Anglice reddita prodit. Ne- que minus illud opusculum quam plurimis vestra- tium, opinor, carum & acceptum esse futurum, si An- glice legendum exhiberetur. Ex libellis tuis istum quoque *de Sacrificio Christi expiatorio, & Spiritus Sancti charismatibus*, in vernaculam nostram translatum esse, spero te cognovisse. Exemplar ejus una cum duobus

duobus programmatibus, auctoritate publica, quia Decanus eram, a me conscriptis, nuper ad Rev. Ziegenhagenium transmisi, multi sane ambabus, quod aiunt, manibus librum hunc exceperere, neque dubium est ullum, quin volo tuo, ut scilicet Deus in Christo glorificetur, hac opera satisfiat. Quibus precibus nostras quoque sociatas esse, persuasum habeto. Tandem gratias tibi ago de opusculis, quæcum litteris tuis reddita mihi sunt, & ex voluntate tua libris orphanotrophei nunc adnumerantur. Præ reliquis mihi placuit illud *de vi & impotentia rationis humanæ*. Argumentum enim est dignum & necessarium, quod inter nos quoque sedulo expendatur & inculcetur: siquidem quam plurimi litteratorum nostrorum recentiore Philosophia Leibnitio Wolfiana eo abripiuntur, ut rationi plus, quam par est, tribuant, & ἀδυναμίαν suam obliviscentes, divina omnia ratione adsequi & emetiri cupiant. Quo fit, ut amissa ratione, non nisi μωβίαν suam aperiant. Testis est præcipue auctor Bibliorum Wertheimensium, qui Christum ex Mose eliminandum & quamplurima dicta in alienum sensum pervertenda curant. Hanc ab causam optarim, ut fieri potest, libellus iste tuus nostratibus quoque legendus proferatur. Ceterum etiam reliqui libelli, maxime qui statum ecclesiæ vestræ docent, mihi fuere pergrati. Iste vero, quem de humilitate seu animi demissione conscripsisti,

fisti, in memoriam mihi revocavit Du Lignonii, qui Labadii partes secutus est, commentationem, lingua Batavica de Nedrige Van Herten inscriptam, quam Germanice redditam me non sine fructu legisse memini. Quod reliquum est, huc usque te valuisse, gaudeo, & ut non corpore solum constanter valeas, sed & Numinis amore mens tua magis magisque fruatur, ex animo precor. Scripsi Halae d. 13 Augusti 1737.

L E T T E R IV.

Q Uemadmodum tibi nuper, vir admodum reverende & Doctissime de parentis mei epistola, quam Anglice interpretandam & typis mandandam curavisti, gratias egi: ita quoque nunc gratam tibi mentem testor, quod ejusdem interpretationis duo exemplaria mihi transmiseris. Novum enim hoc amoris erga me tui documentum esse indicavi. Qua de causa eo magis opto, ut in multos adhuc annos etiam atque etiam valeas, saltem nullus tibi in hac vita diēs transeat, quin favoris divini fructibus vescaris, quo de tuo etiam nos lætemur bono, & plures alii habeant, de quo sibi gratulentur. Reverendis Missionariis, in Domino mihi longe carissimis, Obuchio, Wiedebrochio & Kolhoffio copiam spero factam esse te

adeundi, quos ut porro fauori & precibus tuis commendatos habeas, humanissime ex te peto. Quod reliquum est, pereximium librum tuum, quem de Christo redemptore & sanctificatore nostro conscripisti, traditum a me esse scias, ut in vernaculam nostram conversus, typis exscribatur. Id quod haud quaquam tibi displiciturum confidimus. Vale & nos amare perge. Scripsi Halae d. 13 Jan. 1737.

From JO. HEN. CALLEBERN to Dr. WATTS.

MAGNAM ex litteris, libellisque tuis cepi voluptatem; illæ enim tui erga me favoris testes sunt, hic animo insuper meo fructum attulerunt. Quicquid efficiendæ, firmandæque piæ animi demissioni inservit, id cupide usurpo, ex quo intellexi quam pertinax, & insidiosa sit vitiositas, que ei adversatur, dictorum a certæ formæ abstinencia virorum causam nunc accuratius novi. Reddat Deus christianos homines opinionum partim steriliores, partim tolerantiores; christique vere amantes, ac tenaces fundamenti, quantocunque locorum, aliove disjuncti sint intervallo, consociet ad tractandum & propagandum opus, quod unum est necessarium! Eo sensu ut imbuerem tributes meos, sub lamphili nomine, abhinc septem annis, vulgari scriptum: Henrici Gulielmi Ludolfi, aulæ Anglicanæ secretarii, consilium de universæ ecclesiæ salute procuranda: quod, data occasione, tecum communicato. Directa ad beatum virum, Cott. Matherum narratio epistolica historici operis particula est. Complectitur illud Historiam Ecclesiæ Universæ inde ab anno superioris sæculi octogesimo nono; bona cujusvis, coctas in eo ample a me, commemorantur, at summatim mala; utraque sincere.

Quomodo conatus noster circa Judæos succedat, nova relatio aperiet, quam alia via transmittam. Absoluta est Novi Testamenti editio Judaicogermanica, eodemque idiomate typis jam exscribitur Vetus Testamentum; in quo usque ad posteriorem Samuelis librum pervenimus. Primus laboris fructus extantior in gentis doctoribus quibusdam spectatur. Adsit nobis Deus porro, & tibi quoque, Honoratissime Fautor; servet te quam diutissime inter mortales, luce ac gratia sua mentem tuam beat, laborique tuo felicissimum tribuat successum! Vale in Christo, communi servatore nostro, mihique favore perge. Scr. Halae Saxo-
num, d. 21 Maii, 1738.

From

From Mr. ISAAC WATTS to Mr. ENOCH WATTS.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I Send you the following definitions, or perhaps rather descriptions, according to your request, being the shortest and most comprehensive that I can form upon the subjects. Yours affectionately,

ISAAC WATTS.

The several opinions about religion, that are this day in England, are as follows : First, in respect of doctrine ; Atheists, Deists, Arians, Socinians, Quakers, Papists, Arminians, Sabbatarians, Anabaptists, Calvinists, Baxterians, and Antinomians.

I. A T H E I S T S.

First, Deny the being of God. 2d, Say that the world is eternal, that it had no beginning, and shall have no end, and that as men are continually born, and afterwards die, so successive generations shall last to eternity. Others indeed there are, who say the world was formed some thousands of years ago by atoms, or little particles of matter jumping together by chance, and that these atoms

shall after some time fall to pieces again; and afterwards, it may be, jump into new worlds—a very pretty conceit! So that they believe these atoms to be from eternity to eternity. 3d, Hence it follows, that there is nothing in man distinct from his body, and that the soul is nothing but fine spirits, drawn from the blood and playing about in the brain. 4th, Hence it follows, that they own no after state, but as the brute dies so dies the man, and the soul dies with the body. 5th, As a consequence of all this, they think they may indulge themselves in all manner of pleasures.

II. D E I S T S.

First, They own there is a God. 2d, That this God is to be worshipped, *i. e.* by loving him, honouring, and having awful thoughts of him. 3d, They deny the scriptures to be the word of God, and so are called Antiscripturists. 4th, They deny the Trinity and Christ, and all the methods of the Christian Religion that are particularly revealed in scripture, and oblige themselves only to perform the duties of natural religion, *i. e.* loving and honouring God in general, and sometimes praying to him and giving him thanks, and being honest among men. 5th, Hereby they suppose they so please God, that they shall be in an happy state hereafter,

hereafter, if there be any such thing, for some of them doubt whether there be or no.

III. A R I A N S.

Arians are old heretics, the disciples of one Arius, above one thousand years ago, and in our times some men are apt to believe his errors, which are, First, That Christ is not real and true God, equal with the Father, but only a creature created before all things else, and God made use of him before he made the world. This notion they build upon the false interpretation of 1 John, i. ii. iii. and 1 Colos. xv. xvi. 2d, That Christ is called God only in respect of his office; that is, his doing miracles, his instructing the world, and such like. 3d, They deny the Holy Spirit to be a person in the Godhead, and so overthrow the Trinity, and hence they are called Anti-trinitarians.

IV. S O C I N I A N S.

There was one Socinus in Calvin's time, who revived the heresy of Arius, but explained it after another manner. First, The Socinians deny Christ to be real God, and yet they own the scripture to be the word of God as well as the Arians. 2d, They say Christ did not die to satisfy divine justice for our sins, but only to confirm the truth of his doctrine, and to give us a good example. They

deny a Trinity of persons in the Deity ; they deny original sin, and say that children sin by imitation, not from corrupt nature. The foundation of their errors is that they make reason the interpreter of scripture, and generally believe the soul sleeps with the body till the resurrection.

V. QUAKERS.

They did generally shake and quake at their first coming up, which was about fifty years ago, and thence had their name. They deny all ordinances, and say, they are above them. 3d, They affirm perfection in this life, and deny that Jésus Christ, who died at Jerusaleme, to be true God. They own a light within, which they call Christ and God, and say it is in every man if he would attend to it, and they follow the motions of this light within in all their actions : This gives them the name of Enthusiasts ; though they do not utterly deny scripture, yet speak meanly of it, say it is a dead letter, and that they do not need it because they have the holy spirit in them, &c. they deny honour, and therefore they salute none. In their first rise they had a great many mad frantic fits, and strange. They are lately divided into two sects, one of them follow Pen, of the notions aforementioned, the other George Keith and Mead ; and it is said, they own Christ the Son of God,

God, satisfaction by him, and justification through him, and are by little and little leaving the old Quakers principles.

VI. P A P I S T S.

They deny original sin in that extent as Calvinists own it; also justification by faith alone, perseverance, assurance, &c. They own the doctrine of meritorious works, tradition of equal authority to scripture, the worship of God by images and transubstantiation, the constant sacrifice of the mass, perfection in this life, and works of supererogation, invocation of saints, prayer for the dead, implicit faith, or believing whatever the pope says, purgatory, the pope's supremacy over the church, seven sacraments, and to other things contrary to the reformed churches.

VII. A R M E N I A N S.

There was one Pelagius of old, that invented several opinions about free-will, and against free-grace, those that followed him strictly were called Pelagians; those that allowed more to free-grace were called Semi-Pelagians, almost the same with modern Armenians, called also Remonstrants, and by the common people Free-willers. Their notions are, that God elects none to salvation but on the account of that faith he foresees in them. 2d,
That

That faith and sincere obedience are made the conditions of justification and salvation, just as Adam's perfect obedience would have entitled him to eternal life, and so God repute this imperfect obedience for perfect, having released the rigour of the law upon the account of Christ's satisfaction, that God sent him to die without any particular design to save any particular person by it, but only to redeem all men in general, and now he applies salvation to all that believe and repent. That Christ so far redeemed all men, that none shall be condemned for original sin, nay, they are ready to say, there is no original sin, or at least nothing in that extent, as Calvinists make it, that a natural man may use common grace, so as to attain saving grace and at last salvation. That all the grace that God gives towards the conversion of a sinner, is nothing but persuading him and enlightening his understanding, but some go farther and say, that God gives some little touches to the will of man, to move him to believe and repent, but all of them say, that after all a man is left indifferent. They say God gives a believer grace enough to persevere, but he may not use it, and so fall. That no certainty of perseverance in this life, and consequently no certainty of salvation without particular revelation.

VIII. SABBATARIANS.

These are those who go by the name of Seventh-day-men, because they suppose the Jewish sabbath is not abolished, and therefore they observe our Saturday for their sabbath. They are against baptizing infants. Many of them now only assert a happy state of the church to be expected.

IX. ANABAPTISTS.

They differ not from Calvinists in their doctrine, unless in the article of infant baptism. They generally deny any children to be in covenant of grace, and so deny the seal of the covenant to them. They deny baptism by sprinkling to be real and true baptism. In church government generally Independents.

X. CALVINISTS.

So called from John Calvin, a great reformer; his doctrine the same with the Assembly's Confession of Faith.

XI. BAXTERIANS.

From Mr. Richard Baxter, whose design was to reconcile Calvin and Arminius; his Body of Divinity is part of the one and part of the other. The one God has elected some which shall certainly
be

That faith and sincere obedience are made the conditions of justification and salvation, just as Adam's perfect obedience would have entitled him to eternal life, and so God repute this imperfect obedience for perfect, having released the rigour of the law upon the account of Christ's satisfaction, that God sent him to die without any particular design to save any particular person by it, but only to redeem all men in general, and now he applies salvation to all that believe and repent. That Christ so far redeemed all men, that none shall be condemned for original sin, nay, they are ready to say, there is no original sin, or at least nothing in that extent, as Calvinists make it, that a natural man may use common grace, so as to attain saving grace and at last salvation. That all the grace that God gives towards the conversion of a sinner, is nothing but persuading him and enlightening his understanding, but some go farther and say, that God gives some little touches to the will of man, to move him to believe and repent, but all of them say, that after all a man is left indifferent. They say God gives a believer grace enough to persevere, but he may not use it, and so fall. That no certainty of perseverance in this life, and consequently no certainty of salvation without particular revelation.

VIII. SABBATARIANS.

These are those who go by the name of Seventh-day-men, because they suppose the Jewish sabbath is not abolished, and therefore they observe our Saturday for their sabbath. They are against baptizing infants. Many of them now only assert a happy state of the church to be expected,

IX. ANABAPTISTS.

They differ not from Calvinists in their doctrine, unless in the article of infant baptism. They generally deny any children to be in covenant of grace, and so deny the seal of the covenant to them. They deny baptism by sprinkling to be real and true baptism. In church government generally Independents.

X. CALVINISTS.

So called from John Calvin, a great reformer; his doctrine the same with the Assembly's Confession of Faith.

XI. BAXTERIANS.

From Mr. Richard Baxter, whose design was to reconcile Calvin and Arminius; his Body of Divinity is part of the one and part of the other. The one God has elected some which shall certainly
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be saved, and others to whom the Gospel is preached have sufficient grace given them ; that is, they have common grace, which if they improve well they shall have saving grace according to Arminius. They own, according to Calvin, the merits of Christ's death to be applied to believers only ; but also that all men are in a state capable of salvation. Mr. Baxter says, there may be a certainty of perseverance here, and yet he cannot tell whether a man may not have so weak a degree of saving grace as to lose it again ; a-kin to Arminius.

But so long as Mr. Baxter owns no salvation, but by the salvation of, and merits of Christ, and no application of these without believing, and no true faith but what is the gift of God : hence there is sufficient ground to believe that his opinions, and his followers, who are generally not so wide as himself, are not so exceeding dangerous as some men think them, and we may believe them true christians, though they may differ in many things from the confession of faith, and the general opinions of the reformers and reformed churches.

XII. ANTINOMIANS.

Those called Antinomians now-a-days take not so much care in expressing the Calvinistic doctrine, which most of them pretend to own, and so vent dangerous errors under such dangerous expressions as these :

these: 1st, That God sees no sin in his people, and therefore saints need not ask pardon. 2d, Christ was a murderer, a blasphemer, &c. because he had those sins imputed to him. Christ believed and repented for us as well as died for us. We must not try our assurance or the goodness of our estate by our graces or sanctification; there is no use of the law in driving a man to Christ, and therefore not to be preached. God loves a man never the better for holiness, nor an elect person the worse for unholiness: Christ is a believing sanctification, so far that he need not seek it in himself to evidence justification: faith is not so properly an acceptance of Christ as an assurance that he is ours.

The several opinions about religion are, secondly, in respect of discipline and order. The three chief in England at present are called by the names of Episcopacy, Presbytery, and Independency.

I. EPISCOPACY.

These are those called Conformists, or Church of England. 1st, They own that a bishop is an officer appointed by Christ to over-see churches and their pastors, and in their hands are placed the keys of admission and excommunication of every

every particular church. 2d, All ordination of ministers ought to be by bishops. 3d, That the church, or these heads of it, have power to impose ceremonies. 4th, Hence they worship God in a ceremonious way, as the cross in baptism, bowing at the high altar, kneeling at the sacrament, the surplice, and many other things testify. 5th, They not only allow but impose forms of prayer, and use little else. 6th, Though their great pretensions and chief subjects of their sermons be peace, and love, and unity, though they own these ceremonies to be indifferent in their nature, and believe the Dissenters worship God aright; yet have they almost persecuted them to death for not conforming. But it is hoped this persecuting tenet does not belong to their church, but only was authorized and encouraged by men of power.

II. PRESBYTERY.

The true and original notion of presbetry is, that God hath appointed a synod, or class, or assembly of ministers, or elders, to be superior in power and government to any particular church or officers thereof. 2d, That these synods or councils have power ministerially to determine controversies in faith and discipline, and that any person in a church may appeal to them for any injury received from any church, &c. but this opinion is almost

worn

worn off in England. The tenet of the Presbyterians of our time and day are : 1st, That a minister ought to be ordained by the laying of the hands of other elders or ministers after examination, fasting, and prayer. 2d, That a minister may be ordained so as to have power given him to administer ordinances in general, even before he takes the charge of the church upon him. 3d, That there is no need of any new ordination when they are called to a particular congregation. 4th, That it is the office of a minister to rule in the church, and the peoples duty to consent, though generally the minister will not do any thing in the church without their consent. 5th, If all the church are willing any church act should be done, yet it must not be done without consent of the minister. This is called the minister's having a negative voice, but this is contrary to rigid Independents. 6th, Their doctrine is generally Calvinistical, but many of those who are called Presbyterians have of late years inclined more to Mr. Baxter. 7th, They preach, that good knowledge and a sober conversation is not sufficient evidence of a good state, and yet usually enquire no farther than of the knowledge and conversation of those they admit into their churches ; hence it follows, they are larger in church discipline than Independents. 8th, Most of them own the office of deacons in a

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church,

church, but generally deny any ruling elders distinct from ministers, and yet many of them think it convenient to chuse two or three men of their church to inspect the conversations of others.

III. I N D E P E N D E N T S.

There were some of the Independents heretofore called Brownists, some of whom were very irregular in the management of church affairs, but they are not to be found now; the tenets of rigid Independents are: 1st, That every church hath all the power of governing itself in itself, and that every thing done in a church must be by the majority of the votes of the brethren. 2d, That every church has its minister ordained to itself, and that he cannot administer the ordinances to any other people, and if he preaches among others it is but as a gifted brother. But the generality of Independents follow rather Doctor Owen's notions; their tenets are such as these: 1st, That the power of church government resides in the pastors and elders of every particular church, and that it is the duty of the people to consent; and, nevertheless, because every act in a church is a church act, they never do any thing without the consent of the people, though they receive no new authority by the peoples consenting. 3d, They generally think a minister not to be ordained but

to a particular church, though many of them now think that by virtue of communion of churches, he may preach authoritatively, and administer the ordinances to other churches upon extraordinary occasions. 4th, That it is not absolutely necessary that a minister be ordained by the imposition of hands of other ministers, but only requisite that other ministers should be there present as advisers and assistants when he is ordained by the church that is set apart by their choice, his acceptance, mutual fasting and prayer. 5th, They generally hold more to the doctrine of Calvin than Presbyterians do. 6th, They think it not sufficient ground to be admitted a member, if the person be only examined as to his doctrinal knowledge and sobriety of conversation; but they require with all some hints, or means, or evidences of the work of Grace on their souls, to be professed by them, and that not only to the minister but to the elders also, who are joint rulers in the church. Though this profession of some of their experiences is generally made first to the minister, either by word or writing, but the elders always hear it and are satisfied before the person is admitted a member. 7th, These relations; which the Independents require, are not (as some think) of the word or scripture,

or time, or place, or sermon, by which they were converted; for very few can tell this, but only they discourse and examine them a little of the way of their conviction of sin, of their being brought to know Christ, or at least ask them what evidences they can give why they hope they are true believers, and try to search whether there be sincerity in the heart as much as may be found by outward profession; that they may, as much as in them lies, exclude hypocrites.

From

From Mr. ENOCH WATTS to the Reverend Doctor
his Brother, importuning him to publish his
Hymns, &c.

DEAR BROTHER,

Southampton, March, 1700.

IN your last, you discovered an inclination to oblige the world by shewing it your Hymns in print; and I heartily wish, as well for the satisfaction of the public as myself, that you were something more than inclinable thereunto; I have frequently importuned you to it before now, and your invention as often furnished you with some modest reply to the contrary, as if what I urged was only the effect of a rash and inconsiderate fondness to a brother, but you will have other thoughts of the matter, when I first assure you that that affection, which is inseparable from our near relationship, would have had in me a very different operation, for instead of pressing you to publish, I should with my last efforts have endeavoured the concealment of them, if my best judgment did not direct me to believe it highly conducing to a general benefit, without the least particular disadvantage to yourself; this latter I need not have mentioned, for I am very confident, whoever has the happiness of reading your Hymns (unless he be either sot

or atheist, will have a very favourable opinion of their author, so that at the same time you contribute to the universal advantage, you will procure the esteem of men the most judicious and sensible.

In the second place, you may please to consider, how very mean the performers in this kind of poetry appear in the pieces already extant. Some ancient ones I have seen in my time, who flourished in Hopkins and Sternhold's reign, but Mason now reduces this kind of writing to a sort of yawning indifferency, and honest Barton chimes us asleep. There is therefore great need of a piece, vigorous and lively as yours, to quicken and revive the dying devotion of the age, to which nothing can afford such assistance as poetry, contrived on purpose to elevate us even above ourselves. To what may we impute the prevalency of the songs, filled with the fabulous divinity of the ancient fathers, on our passions? Is it, think you, only owing to a natural propensity in us to be in love with fable, and averse to truth in her native plainness. I presume it may partly be ascribed to this, that as romance has really more need of artifice than truth to set it off, so it generally has such an abundance more, that it seldom fails of affecting us, by making new and agreeable impressions. Yours now is the old truth, stripped of its ragged ornaments, and appears, if we may say so, younger by ages
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in a new and fashionable dress, which is commonly tempting.

And as for those modern gentlemen, who have lately exhibited their version of the psalms : all of them I have not seen I confess, and perhaps it would not be worth while to do it, unless I had a mind to play the critic, which you know is not my talent; but those I have read confess to me a vast deference to yours, though they are done by persons of mean credit. Dr. Patrick most certainly has the report of a very learned man, and, they say, understands the Hebrew extremely well, which indeed capacitates him for a translator, but he is thereby never the more enabled to versify. Tate and Brady still keep near the same pace; I know not what sober beast they ride (one that will be content to carry double) but I am sure it is no Pegasus; there is in them a mighty deficiency of that life and soul, which is necessary to raise our fancies and kindle and fire our passions; and something or other they have to alledge against the rest of adventurers; but I have been persuaded a great while since, that were David to speak English he would choose to make use of your style. If what I have said seems to have no weight with you, yet you cannot be ignorant what a load of scandal lies on the Dissenters, only for their

imagined aversion to poetry. You remember what Dr. Speed says.

So far hath schism prevailed, they hate to see
Our lines and words in couplings to agree,
It looks too like abhorr'd conformity :
A hymn so soft, so smooth, so neatly dress'd,
Savours of human learning and the beast.

And perhaps it has been thought there were some grounds for his aspersions from the admired poems of Ben Keach, John Bunyan, &c. all flat and dull as they are ; nay, I am much out, if the latter has not formerly made much more ravishing music with his hammer and brass kettle.

Now when yours are exposed to the public view, these calumnies will immediately vanish, which methinks should be a motive not the least considerable. And now we are talking of music, I have a crotchet in my brain, which makes me imagine that, as cords and discords equally please heavy-eared people, so the best divine poems will no more inspire the rude and illiterate than the meanest rhymes, which may in some measure give you satisfaction in that fear you discover, *ne in rude vulgus cadant*, and you must allow them to be tasteless to many people, tolerable to some, but to those few who know their beauties, to be very pleasant and desirable ; and lastly, if I do not speak reason, I
will

will at present take my leave of you, and only desire you to hear what your ingenious acquaintance at London say to the point, for I doubt not you have many solicitors there, whose judgments are much more solid than mine. I pray God Almighty have you in his good keeping, and desire you to believe me, my dear brother, your most affectionate kinsman and friend,

ENOCH WATTS.

From Dr. WATTS to Mr. BRADBURY.

DEAR BROTHER,

London, Feb. 26, 1724-5.

THOUGH your late conduct in several instances seems to have renounced the paternal bonds and duties of love, yet charity persuades me to give you that appellation. I was much concerned that you should have so great and weighty accusations against my worthy colleague Mr. Price, as to give so many ministers and gentlemen the trouble of a particular summons to attend and hear the cause last Monday, viz. Feb. 22. He assures me that he expected to have heard some important and dreadful misdeameanors laid to his charge, worthy of such a solemnity; though he could not guess what they were, being not conscious to himself of any heinous and criminal behaviour. But when the whole charge amounted to no more, than the imprudent mention of your name in a letter which he confesses had been better concealed, I suspect that all indifferent persons will form a judgment of the temper and spirit which influenced you in this affair not much to your advantage. However, I am glad that it was so happily finished, and a mutual reconciliation agreed on by some degrees of
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acknowledgment on each side. May that agreement and peace be lasting.

As for what relates to myself, I had never designed to have taken any notice of the reproaches and sarcastical language with which you have treated me, both from the pulpit and from the press, having in some measure learnt of our great Lord and Master, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously. But when in the midst of our late debates at Lime-street you stood up and made such solemn protestations of your own innocence under four general heads, and declared distinctly, that "No man could charge you with ingratitude; No man could charge you with quarrelling; No man could charge you with falshood or lying; No man could charge you with injustice:" and when you repeated this twice over with an uncommon degree of assurance in that assembly, I could not but stand amazed, and thought the providence of God called me at this season to make a reply in my own vindication; for since your censures of me have been sufficiently public, had I been silent at this time I might have been reasonably suspected to have provoked you to some very great degree, and to have given you just ground for the public reproaches thrown upon me.

First,

First, You disclaim all manner of contention or quarrelling; and, because you were sensible this might be abundantly charged upon you when I repeated your word to you, you explained yourself, "That you never begun a quarrel with any man."

You may remember, Sir, that I then enquired of you in that assembly, Whether ever I had given you occasion to quarrel with me? to which you made an honest and generous reply, and said, "I had given you none."

I entreated you then to consider whether all the hard language that you had bestowed on me in several sermons at Pinner's Hall, were not the beginning of a contention, if I had suffered resentment to arise and made a like return, you were pleased to defend yourself by affirming, "That you designed not to make it a matter of contention, nor to cast reproaches upon me:" though the knowing part of the assembly understood your meaning, but many plain and pious christians came away grieved, and wondered what a sad contention was fallen out between Mr. Bradbury and Mr. Watts. What the particular expressions were, are better known to yourself than to me, though I have heard several of them too,

Among other things I could not but be surprized that you should fall so foul both in preaching and
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in print upon my books of Psalms and Hymns ; when, while I was composing the Book of Psalms, I have consulted with you particularly about the various metres, and have received directions from you in a little note under your own hand, which was sent me many years ago by my brother, wherein you desired me to fit the fiftieth and one hundred and twenty second Psalms to their proper metre : though I cannot say that I am much obliged to you for the directions you then gave me, for they led me into a mistake in both those Psalms with regard to the metre, as I can particularly inform you if desired.

As for the severe and ridiculing language you have used in your last volume of Sermons, you disclaim any designed reproach in them : nor will I attempt to convince you of it any other way than this, viz. be pleased to turn to those pages both in the preface and in the seventh sermon, which you know how to find, and ask your own conscience, in a retired hour, whether you think you should be sensible of no reproach in all those expressions, if another person had wrote them and pointed them at yourself.

I only ask you now, Sir, whether you think you stand entirely clear (even your own conscience being judge) of beginning a quarrel with me.

Besides,

Besides, good Sir, be pleased to look back upon former years and scenes of transaction with Mr. Bennet at Newcastle, with Mr. Galpin at Stepney, with Mr. Andrews your deacon, and others of your own church, the first year you came among them; look back to your contentions with many of your brethren in the ministry, and many gentlemen in the world, and tell me if there be any one minister this day in London who hath been so often in the fire of contention, and embroiled in so many quarrels as Mr. Bradbury. Assure yourself, Sir, the world will not always believe that all your antagonists were the angry and quarrelsome men, and that Mr. Bradbury was ever innocent and peaceful.

But let me now come to the second thing which you so utterly disclaim, and that is ingratitude; I confess I am very unwilling, and it is a pain to me to mention any kindness I have done for a friend: but upon this occasion you constrain me to say thus much. I little thought that the man whom I had so often excused in days past when he has been charged with excessive levity and vain conversation, and vindicated his reputation as far as possible, should ever have indulged himself to insult and ridicule me in print, while he confesses I have never begun any quarrel with him. I little thought that a person for whom I procured the assistance of about twenty guineas
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or upwards towards the education of a near relation, should have rewarded me with reproaches; I did not expect that a man whom I had presented with every book I published till within a few late years, should never have made me a return of any books he has published, except a few sermons on the 5th of November almost twenty years ago, and I think a single Sermon for the Reformation, and one on the Storm. Not that I am begging a share in your publications. No, Sir, a few shillings will easily supply me with them: but your conduct in this point among other things, I am sure, will secure me from any shadow of unkindness in that I have lately made you no presents of this kind.

And as for my little book of the Trinity which I gave you when it first came out, one would have thought, that you should at least with decency and gentleness have argued against the notions which you disapproved in a man who espoused the same cause, and not have cited them on purpose to make a jest of the author without the least attempt toward a refutation.

A third crime which you so roundly and utterly disclaim, was that of falsehood or lying; and a fourth, was that of injustice. Here I only enquire, whether what you yourself confess you reported of Mr. Hotham was both just and true, viz. That
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if such an exhibition were with-held from a person in the country, it must be Mr. Hotham that had done it? I enquire again, whether your repeated charge and accusation of Mr. Price for bespeaking a dinner and not attending it, were a truth? I enquire again, whether the charges and scandalous accusations which you brought against several ministers in your letters to Berwick, were strictly true and just? Whether all that you have published, both in express language and in evident innuendos, against my Lord Barrington and Mr. Nevil, be strictly truth? Whether in your contentions with our reverend and worthy brother Mr. Clarke, there was always justice and truth observed on your side? I confess I have so little intermingled in any of these affairs that I know but few particular circumstances. But give me leave to tell you, Sir, that there is not any one minister in London whom I have heard so often charged with falshood and injustice in such sort of contentions as Mr. Bradbury.

I wish, good Sir, it were but possible for you to look upon your own conduct abstracted from that fondness which we all naturally bear to self, and see whether there be no occasion for some humbling and penitent thoughts in the sight of God. It has pleased the great Lord of his church, to furnish you liberally with some sprightly talents that

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might

might be made honourably useful in the service of the temple, and I hope and believe they have been employed in some measure to that sacred purpose. You might maintain the truth with zeal, and adorn the gospel of truth without wrath and reviling. I beg you would not always persuade yourself and proclaim to the world, that the censures that fall upon you arise only from your zeal for the piety of our blessed Saviour. It is your conduct in the world that has thus exposed you; for there are several persons, perhaps of equal zeal for the same doctrine, who do not fall under the same censures, because their behaviour in life does not give the same occasion.

Believe me, Sir, it is not the design of this letter to carry on a quarrel with you: I should rejoice to see your own temper mollified a little, and the talents with which God has entrusted you happily employed to support and promote truth and godliness in the spirit of the gospel, *i. e.* in the spirit of meekness and love. Consider what a fair handle you give to the adversaries of christianity, and of the dissenting interest, to cast shame and scoffs upon our holy profession by your continual quarrels. If your vein of wit wants a vent, think how much better it may break out on the profane libertines and the scurrilous infidels of the age, than on your friends and brethren, who adore the same God and Saviour, and preach the same gospel.

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I declare sincerely, I write those lines as an honest and christian admonition to a brother, whom I should rejoice to see recovered to a friendly temper with all those who are engaged in the same sacred work and office. I heartily pray that your wit may be all sanctified, that you may minister in holy things with honour and purity and great success, and that you may become as eminent and as public an example of piety, meekness, heavenly mindedness, and love to all the saints, as your own soul wishes and desires. Farewel, dear brother, and forgive this freedom of your sincere friend and humble servant,

I. WATTS.

From

From Dr. WATTS to the Reverend Mr. THOMAS
BRADBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

January 24, 1725-6.

AS several weeks past away before you could determine in what manner to return an answer to that occasional letter which you received from me November 1st, so you will easily forgive me if I also was at a loss in what manner to answer yours. There seemed to be so much of the same temper and spirit in it which your conduct had expressed in various instances this last year or two, that I had but little hope of saying any thing that might give a happier turn to your thoughts.

Yet at last I resolved to answer it: for I said to myself, perhaps it was written under the influence of that ruffling rencounter which you had with my brother the day before. I must needs confess, indeed, that many of my friends pass an harder censure upon your treatment of me than ever I have done: yet, after all, you declare "that you had taken abundant care not to grieve my spirit;" which sentence constrains me to wish you could but turn the tables, Sir, and suppose every thing you had spoken and written, both in public and private, against me, were spoken and written against yourself; and then I am persuaded you would never

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believe

believe that speaker or writer had "taken abundant care not to grieve your spirit."

The first part of your letter lays severe accusations upon those whom I call "my worthy brethren." As for your charges of Mr. Price, I thought they had been all talked over and adjusted at the meeting which you had summoned in February last: after such a public and mutual confession and reconciliation, I think it is contrary to all the rules of christian and human society to make the same things a matter of perpetual fresh accusation: and I am persuaded Mr. Bradbury would think so too, if it was merely a cause between Caius and Titius.

You are pleased to call him "my favourite;" and I must acknowledge that by twenty years experience I have found him to be a sincere good man, and love him as such. You term yourself "my abhorrence:" a most surprizing word! for which I have never given you any occasion. But I entreat you, Sir, to ask yourself whether your conduct towards me, has not laid a juster foundation for your applying that term in another manner.

You tell me that "I am now apprized that one of the ministers at our board was a contributor of some papers to a book full of personal reflections and low dirt." To which I answer, solemnly, I known nothing at all of that matter, nor have I any sufficient ground so much as to conjecture the
truth

truth of what you seem to intend concerning Mr. Neale.

Your following paragraphs repeat some of those obliging and respectful expressions concerning me, which you used in your letter to the board. I thankfully acknowledge the former respect I have received from you; but I would entreat you, Sir, that such expressions may not be used as a medium more effectually to add credit to sentences of a censorious kind. I could inform you also if it were needful, what pains I have taken many a time to screen your character and reputation from those charges of licentious levity of conduct and conversation, which have been cast upon you; so that I have not been behind hand with you in paying respect.

You surprize me again, Sir, by telling me that my writings have been called "profane, impudent, pragmatical, by ministers who have more of my good will than you have, and that I have not so much of their good will as I have of Mr. Bradbury's." At this I can only stand amazed, and doubt, and be silent!

If you do not believe there was a vote passed at the board that your company should be desired as in times past, and that all these late contests should be buried, ask your good friend Mr. Horrocks, who came immediately from the board into our

house, and conversed freely with me about it, acknowledging that the greatest part of hands were held up for that question, and remarking one or two that were not held up ; which I hope will refresh his memory, and convince you of the truth of it, though it was not written down in the book among the transactions of the day.

When you charge us with “ inviting two messengers of your church to sit there without their pastor, I know of nothing but this, that since the board continued expecting your return, and we knew nothing of your churches joining with you in any resolution to the contrary, we thought therefore that under such expectations they might have liberty to sit there till the end of the year, which they also seemed to desire ; unless it were fully determined before that time that you would not join with us, nor bring your collection to our board.

I am obliged to you that in any following paragraph you do me the honour and justice to say expressly, “ I never gave you any occasion to use me ill,” and you add, “ that you have given me no occasion to think I did :” for this I will refer you only to the express words of that you have preached and printed, omitting the language of your occasional conversation. Nay, I would only ask whether the preface and some other passages of your
sermons,

sermons, printed eighteen months ago, have used me well?

What I wrote about reviewing your own conduct, abstracted from a fondness for self, you strain into a construction which came not into my heart, as though you were “given up to a reprobate mind, &c.”

And here, good Sir, give me leave to take notice, that it is the strength and vivacity of your imagination that is so ready to magnify and swell any supposed reflections, you receive from your brethren, to a prodigious size, while the reproaches and censures you pass upon them are, by the same lively imagination, contracted and shrunk to nothing, because you feel them not.

As for my thoughts and expressions, concerning the person of our blessed Saviour, and the doctrine of his deity, I can only tell you again, that all my labour and care has been engaged to support that doctrine, in such a manner as might most effectually refute both the objections and the calumnies of those who oppose it. Your reflections on such a profession, of my seeking for divine guidance, with the story of Socinius, carries in it an unbecoming air, to say no worse; and your further turns of wit on my prayers for you, shall receive no answer from me but silence.

You

You tell me that “ I rival it with David, whether he or I be the sweet psalmist of Israel.” I abhor the thought ; while yet at the same time I am fully persuaded, that the Jewish psalm book was never designed to be the only psalter for the christian church ; and though we may borrow many parts of the prayers of Ezra, Job and Daniel, as well as of David, yet if we take them entire as they stand, and join nothing of the gospel with them, I think there few of them will be found proper prayers for a christian church ; and yet I think it would be very unjust to say, “ we rival it with Ezra, Job, &c.” Surely their prayers are not best for us, since we are commanded to ask every thing in the name of Christ. Now, I know no reason why the glorious discoveries of the New Testament should not be mingled with our songs and praises, as well as with our prayers. I give solemn thanks to my Saviour, with all my soul, that he hath honoured me so far, as to bring his name and gospel in a more evident and express manner into christian psalmody.

And since I find that you have been pleased to make my hymns, and imitation of the psalms, together with their prefaces, the object of your frequent and harsh censures, give me leave to ask you, whether I did not consult with you while I was translating the psalms in this manner, fourteen or
fifteen

fifteen years ago ? Whether I was not encouraged by you in this work, even when you fully knew my design, by what I had printed, as well as by conversation ? Did you not send me a note, under your own hand, by my brother, with a request, that I would form the fiftieth and the hundred and twenty-second psalms into their proper old metre ? And in that note you told me too, that one was six lines of heroic verse, or ten syllables, and the other six lines of shorter metre : by following those directions precisely, I confess I committed a mistake in both of them, or at least in the last ; nor had I ever thought of putting in those metres, nor considered the number of the lines, nor the measure of them, but by your direction, and at your request.

I allow, Sir, with great freedom, that you may have changed your opinion since, and you have a right to do it without the least blame from me ; but I do declare it, that at that time you were one of my encouragers, and therefore your present censures should be lighter and softer.

You desire me at the end “ to remember former friendships ;” but you will give me leave to ask which of us has forgot them most : and I am well assured, that I have more effectually approved myself all that which you are pleased to subscribe,

viz. your steady, hearty, and real friend, your obedient and devoted servant,

I. W A T T S.

P. S. It has always been a painful and a grievous thing to me, to hold a contest with any person living, much more with one for whom I have had so sincere an esteem ; more especially since my constitution and my spirits are much broken by long illness. If therefore the temper of your mind continues the same as runs through a good part of your two letters to the board and to me, I can neither desire nor expect a return to this paper, nor am I willing by any means to carry on such an epistolary contention : If you think fit to talk with me on any of these heads, in a spirit of meekness, I am very ready to give you further satisfaction about any of them. I confess I have heard it observed in conversation, that there is some hope you may relent, because you have neither put my Lord Barrington, nor Mr. Neal, nor myself, into your last preface : and if the great God, in whose hands are all our hearts, should reduce you to a gentler frame of spirit, and a more christian conduct towards your brethren, you shall find none of those, whom you have reproached, more ready to serve and honour you, than your humble servant and brother, &c.

From

From the Reverend Mr. THOMAS BRADBURY to
Doctor WATTS.

REVEREND SIR,

Charter-square, Jan. 27, 1725-6.

YOUR last letter gives me abundant conviction. It is not in my power to make any defence for a conduct you are resolved to run down. General declamations against my temper and spirit are all the answer I am to have. The charge you brought against me in your former letter was, not of opposing your notions, and maintaining those wholesome ways of speaking, to which the churches of Christ had been used in every kindred and tongue, and people and nation. Had I been accused of continuing in the things that I had long learned; or of disapproving the humour of novelties in doctrine, I would have owned it all; but you accuse me of "making it sufficiently appear that I design reproach to the man," and tell me "that particular instances of this kind you need not rehearse:" I suppose by this you would insinuate, that they are both numerous and flagrant. Upon this you think "yourself obliged to admonish me as a brother against the wrath of man;" and entreat me to "consider what degree of passion and personal sentiment may mingle themselves with my supposed zeal for the gospel."

I

To

To this horrid charge I pleaded not guilty, and though you will allow mine to be no more than a “supposed zeal for the gospel,” it is neither better nor worse for your unkind opinion. But I did deny, and do again, that it ever led me into any personal reflections upon you; and I was in hopes, that unless you had more evidence for it than tale-bearers, my protestation might have been allowed: but instead of that you go on with your evil surmising. I aver that there is not one sentence in the book you refer me to, that will support your violent accusation.

I wish I had never told you what care I had not to grieve your spirit, since it is what you will neither believe nor value. But do you think that there was no room for more remarks than I have given you? Or that what I observed was the only passage in your notions on the Trinity or Psalmody that have stumbled me and many others? No, I had my affliction almost in every page; and as mean as my abilities are, I always thought them sufficient to shew, that you had departed from the plain text of scripture, and allowed yourself in dangerous vagaries of human invention.

And are you resolved if any one, who has no mind to have the divinity of his Saviour evaporate into an attribute, and his humanity to be different from the nature that he represented, and gives you
reason

reason for his standing in the good old paths ; are you resolved, I say, either to silence such an author or torment him, by calling his arguments “ personal reflections ?” Is not that abusing the man whom you ought to answer ? If you give yourself any further trouble about me, either let me know what you take to be a “ *personal reflection and disgrace,*” or drop the charge. Be not guilty of taking up a report against your neighbour.

I am again sorry that I writ so many obliging things as you call them, which contained my real sentiments of your excellent qualifications ; because you tell me those are “ used as a medium to add credit to sentences of a censorious kind.” I see by this pruning of words, to a meaning that the Lord knows was never within me, that it is impossible I should please a person that searches for iniquity.

What you tell me of your friendships, “ many a time to screen my reputation from the charges of licentious levity” is amazing to me. The terms of “ licentious levity” have as ill a sound as can be, or at best a very uncertain one. If you have ever heard that these licentious levities, went the length of profane babbling, filthy communication, or drunkenness, so grievous this falsehood has been to me, that not once in all my life have I been guilty in any of these particulars. If by these levities
you

you mean no more than fingering, jesting, and what is known to be my natural temper, it is pity you called them "licentious;" the former will not bear a skreen, and the latter does not need one.

What I writ about the uneasiness of ministers, and of the names they gave you, which you doubt of, both I and many others are sure of: and if I can either believe what I see or hear, I must think you have no doubt of it.

The story about my being invited to the fund you mistake. I knew, I heard, that at your reading of my letter this was done: but what I complain of is, that when an invitation was given to Mr. Dance and Mr. Bull, at that time there was none sent to me; and it is this, I believe, that your gentleman referred to, who told me there was none.

I made no such remark as you intimate of your thinking me given up to a reprobate mind, on your advising me to review my conduct; but it was upon your "wishing it but possible I should do so."

Your turn is very unkind to what I said about your daily prayers, you put up for light into the doctrine of our blessed Saviour. I hinted, that such an insinuation ought to have no place in an argument, and I gave you an instance of how little value it was. I doubt not Dr. Owen, and I hope thousands that have not dissented from him can say the same, though they seldom do. But
if

if they are not so free to tell what is done in secret, do not suppose they are prayerless disputants. I trust that many who now bear the reproach of Christ, will be found among the generation of seekers.

Your notions about psalmody, and your satyrical flourishes in which you have expressed them, are fitter for one who pays no regard to inspiration, than for a gospel minister, as I may hereafter shew in a more public way.

But I must tell you, there is hardly any foundation for what you say about my encouraging that work fifteen years ago. I was glad to hear that your thoughts were turned to a translation of David's Psalms; I thought it was a good evidence that you begun to come in to them, as others do; that they are not of private interpretation, but what God designed for his churches under the New Testament. In order therefore to make your work more useful, I desired you to put in two measures which Dr. Patrick has omitted, because we have admirable tunes fitted to them.

But you are mistaken if you think I ever knew, and much less admired, your mangling, garbling, transforming, &c. so many of your songs of Sion; your preface to your work is of the same strain with what you had writ before; and if I remember that, you had my opinion very freely, in company with the late Mr. Thomas Collings.

One

One passage I had almost overlooked relating to a minister at the board, that he was a contributor to the Appeal, which I call a book *full of personal reflections and low dirt: you answer, solemnly, that you know nothing of the matter.* You must then have forgot that Mr. Neale, at the board, owned he writ a part of it.

My not naming you, or Lord B. or Mr. Neale, in a late preface, was what I always designed. I should never have levelled you, as you have done yourself, with the man who had caused all our divisions, and whose character is made indelible by the unanimous vote of parliament; so vain were the extravagant commendations that you sent down to Berwick.

Your opinion of Mr. Price should not be opposed to his savage impudent language upon all the subscribing ministers, and his rudeness and injustice to me, which was never confessed by him, and never made up at the board.

I ask your pardon for calling myself your abhorrence, the expression is, my abhorrence: but I meant no more by it, than that you shewed more favour to him who did the injury, than to him who received it. Pity the passion you find in one who meets with provocations and do not overlook it in the man that gives them. I am, dear Sir, your most hearty friend and servant,

THO. BRADBURY.

From

From Dr. WATTS to the Reverend Mr. THOMAS
BRADBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

Feb. 2, 1725*.

I Thought to have written no more on these subjects of our debate; but since your last letter charges me with "general declamations against your temper and spirit, with evil surmifings, violent accusations, and harkening to officious tale-bearers," since you require "that I would let you know what I take to be a personal reflection, or to drop the charge," I thought myself bound in duty to point you to your sermons at the Wednesday lecture, pref. p. 7, 8. Sermon 7th, p. 105, the first of which I believe you will grant is treating me with ridicule instead of reasoning: and the second, is taking a scourge out of Dr. Owen's hand with which he attacks the Socinians, to suit me with it, without so much as the attempt of an argument against the foregoing page which you cite out of my book of the Trinity. And, indeed, in that page I must still declare, that I think I have done service to that article of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, even in the most orthodox explication of it, by shewing what reasons might be given why

* But being in Essex near a month I did not send this till March 2.

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the Holy Spirit was not expressly invoked in scripture, though true Godhead belongs to him.

Now, Sir, when I was informed by several persons, and even by some of those who were ear-witnesses, of severe reflections cast on me in public preaching as well as in your conversation, I could not reasonably disbelieve several of them; since what you had published to the world in print, assured me that you might have conceived anger enough to say those things which were reported to me. But I thought it was very sufficient to give a general hint of those things to yourself, since the rehearsal of them might be imperfect, and all the words not exactly repeated, and might have occasioned and required more of what is called proving and defending, than I desire.

But if after all you will aver that there is not one sentence in the book I have cited, which will support my accusation, *i.e.* "of personal reflections," I may easily infer, that you allow nothing else to be called so, whatever you have spoken elsewhere. But there is an higher judgment and a more awful sentence concerning persons and things than yours or mine: and I desire ever to act, write, and speak in such a manner concerning my fellow christians, as may approve itself in the rehearsal at that great day: and I entreat you, Sir, to walk by the same rule. That day will make a just and solemn distinction

inction between arguments for the truth and reproaches of a brother.

I acknowledge with respect and thankfulness, the kind opinions you have entertained of me ; and I really “ value all the care that you have shewn not to grieve my spirit,” wheresoever I see it practised. I easily believe, indeed, that your natural talent of wit is richly sufficient to have taken occasions from an hundred passages in my writings to have filled your pages with much severer censures. In the vivacity of wit, in the copiousness of style, in readiness of scripture phrases, and other useful talents, I freely own you far my superior, and will never pretend to become your rival. But it is only calm and sedate argument that weighs with me in matters of controversy : nor will I be displeased with any man for shewing me my mistakes by force of argument, and in a spirit of meekness : it is only in this manner truth must be searched out, and not by wit and raillery.

I know not of any thing in all my writings on the subject of psalmody that can deserve the name of a “ satyrical flourish,” unless it be one sentence in the Appendix to my first edition of Hymns, which was written near twenty years ago, and should have been revoked or corrected long since, had I ever reprinted it ; and therefore I shall by no means support or defend that expression now.

But as to "fatyrical flourishes," Sir, it has been always accounted by the world one peculiar excellency of your writings, wheresoever those flourishes were just and proper. And you will forgive me, Sir, if I say, that your charging me with making the "divinity of Christ evaporate into an attribute," is such a flourish, borrowed from the chymists, and a very unjust one too, if you would read my Differt. 7th page, (I think) sect. 2. the book is not at hand; besides much more that I have to say to relieve that charge whensoever I shall publish more of my papers.

And since, Sir, you so often repeat that scandalous reflection upon the subscribing ministers, with which you charged Mr. Price at the board, I think it necessary to put you in mind, he utterly denied the remembrance of any such expression, that he solemnly declared it was contrary to his thoughts and sentiments of them; and if it could ever be made to appear that he used such an expression, he would with the utmost freedom renounce and retract it. And I think, after such sort of declarations as these, a man ought not to receive repeated charges.

For this reason, Sir, you ought not to be charged with telling me that I count you "my abhorrence," since with a christian and becoming paragraph you conclude your letter, utterly retracting that warm expression.

I did

I did not think, Sir, to have given you so much trouble as this, I have more important affairs that demand the few hours wherein I am capable of applying myself to read or write. I pray God still that he would give you to see things in a juster light, and grant you such a peaceful spirit in all your conduct as appears in your last paragraph, and that for the service of our common Lord and his gospel. After all your censures, I thank my God, I can forgive, and I hope I shall continue to carry it towards you as becomes a christian brother, and faithful servant for Christ's sake, unless your carriage renounce all such sort of relations.

I. WATTS.

From the Rev. Mr. BRADBURY to Dr. WATTS.

REV. SIR,

Charter-square, March 7, 1725-6.

YOUR letter, that is dated the 2d of Feb. and was sent the 3d of March, makes me fear, that whatever zeal you may have for peace, yet it is not at all turned towards any peace with me. I was in hopes, that when I had denied, with so much vehemence, my ever loading your name with personal reflections, you would either have quitted the charge, or proved it. But you are resolved I should be guilty, as it was a dishonourable thing to be driven from an accusation, and nonsuited in scandal. Your first letter made no mention of what I had printed, but referred me to numerous and undeniable instances of personal abuses in my conversation. If my book had offended you, it ought to have been answered in a more public way; but as you thought not fit to take notice of it from the press, I could never imagine it was that you meant in the terrible charge that began this epistolary war between us.

However, as you resolve that some accusation or other shall be adherent, I must follow your searches for iniquity. And I think it amounts to a personal reflection on me, for you to believe that I will grant, that the preface to my book treats you with
ridicule

ridicule instead of reason. Whatever you will believe I know not, but I grant no such thing. That I might have said a great deal more against unbounded imaginations upon revealed articles of faith, is true; and because I did not, some people have blamed me, and indeed they guessed the reason, which passes for so little with you, viz. the abundant affection I have had for you. If ever I write upon that subject again, neither my friends, who are angry for my saying no more, nor you who blame me from dropping the argument, shall have any occasion to complain.

I call you in that preface “ my dear and worthy friend,” and remark upon nothing but the impropriety of your allusions, and the danger of any similitude in your doctrine of the Trinity; and as there never was, nor can be such a whimsical instance as you have conceived, for an illustration to the the only existence that is eternal and necessary, so I must tell you, it shews a fondness for what is your own, to put that into a second book, which so many persons read with horror and trouble in the first; and it is no less than resembling a mystery by a monster, which is the way to have it despised, and can have no other effect upon an Arian, than to confirm his prejudice and swell his vanity.

As to the quotation out of Dr. Owen, it is what my learned tutor, Mr. Whitaker, above thirty years ago, desired me to remember. He thought me in danger from an exorbitant fancy, and a poetical humour, and gave me several examples how unhappily several people had entangled, obscured and debased the doctrine of the gospel. If the Doctor's words are observed as a *rule*, it will do very well. If you are determined to read them as a *mark*, I cannot help it. I am sorry they fit you. Had you obeyed them before you writ, it had done more good, than now to resent them afterwards.

I was in hopes, from the title page of your first book, that we should have had the plain scripture doctrine, "without the aid and incumbrance of human schemes:" for though I think that vanity in the frontispiece is an insult upon the many authors who had so lately writ upon the subject, yet if it proved a guard upon yourself, I should have been glad; but if ever the article was encumbered with human schemes, it is so by your dissertations; and you, of all men living, had the least reason to insinuate so hard a censure upon Drs. Waterland, Knight, and the London ministers, Messrs. Moore, Enty, Smallbrook, and indeed every one besides, who had engaged in these battles of the Lord.

But

But I wonder what makes you say, that the words I quoted are “ a scourge with which Dr. Owen attacks the Socinians.” I take it for a direction to those who are writing in defence of the truth; and had you regarded your great predecessor, the author of the Appeal to the Turk and Indian, could never have made so terrible work as he has done.

What you add about your notion of the Spirit dwelling in believers, as a reason why he is not the express object of our worship, may be reconciled to the Socinian hypothesis, but it is no more consistent with ours, than Dagon was with the ark of the living God: for you know, that your people, whom you call orthodox, (in what sense of the word I will not enquire) never thought the incense of the Holy Ghost in them, any argument why he was not to be adored by them.

In quoting your words, I have taken more care than I needed to have done, on purpose to make you easy, calling your treatise a “ serious book,” and yourself a “ valuable author:” besides, I mention this passage as what the enemies of the cause have “ triumphantly quoted, and make their earnings of.” I call it no more than “ an unguarded passage.” I profess my satisfaction in what you had said for the worship of each person, and lament that our faith and duty should be

rendered uncertain by may be's; or that a Socinian should have occasion to insult a book which he cannot answer. If there is any personal reflection in this, it is more than I can see, or you either, unless you give your imagination the same liberty in censure that you do in doctrine, and maintain evil surmisings as a part of free-thinking.

What "several persons told you of severe reflections I cast on you in public preaching and conversation," was the original charge to which I pleaded my innocence. I can do no more than tell you, that all the stories are false; I challenged you to give me one instance, and now you slur it over with the poor excuse, that you do not like "defending and proving;" after three tiresome letters on both sides, I am neither to know the accusers nor the accusation. I thought after such a terrible impeachment, I should have had articles upon facts, but rather than do this, you think it easier to condemn me by wholesale.

And how horrid is it, instead of doing me the justice to mention what I have been guilty of, to threaten me with the higher judgment of God; that will make "a solemn distinction between arguments for the truth and reproaches to a brother." Sir, I can say, that my conversation has been with simplicity and godly sincerity, "and
more

more especially to your aid." May you and I learn never to make the book of God a screen to our imaginations, nor the fear of God a bauble to our resentments. This is too often a common place of anger and scolding. Learn to imitate him of whose authority you would make me afraid ; it is not his way to judge by the hearing of the ear.

It is ungenerous, after I had told you of my " care not to grieve your spirit," to acknowledge it with respect and thankfulness, and then come off with a creeping, ill-natured proviso, " when you see it practised." Sir, I again demand an instance to the contrary ; and, if you have seen nothing of this case even in the letters and books, that have expressed my differing with you, it is because you will not see. But I will tell you another instance, which perhaps you may not have heard of. When I knew that Messrs. Nesbit, Clark, Neal and Toper, had writ to Berwick in recommendation of Lord Barrington and Mr. Neville ; my correspondent told me, that Mr. Watts had sent them in a letter of the most extravagant encomiums that ever were heard, and that you represented Lord Barrington as something more than a man. Though I made my remarks upon the four ministers, yet to what you writ I was totally silent, which I assure you was not owing to any approbation of your conduct, but to my tenderness for your peace ; and this partiality
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to you is what Mr. Clarke insulted me for. If the account I have of your letter to Berwick is wrong, I desire you will set me right, that when I publish the whole story of the affair I may do you no injury.

What you say about my talent for “satyrical flourishes” may be true; nor am I ashamed to use them against Popery and Arianism, the two great branches of antichristian idolatry; but I never used them upon the Psalms of David, or any of the words that the Holy Ghost has taught. I durst not be so merry as you have been with a book that was ever received as a treasure of all divine experience. What a lampoon would the following passage have appeared, had it come from another (the people) “follow with a chearful ignorance, whenever the clerk leads them across the river Jordan, through the land of Gebal and Ammon, and Amalek, he takes them into the strong city, he brings them into Edom, anon they follow him through the valley of Baca, till they come up to Jerusalem; they wait upon him into the court of burnt offering, and bind their sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar; they enter so far into the temple, till they join their songs in concert with the high-sounding cymbals, their thoughts are bedarkened with the smoke of incense, and covered with Jewish veils.”

Should

Should any one take the liberty of burlesquing your poetry, as you have done that of the most high God, you might call it "personal reflection," indeed. When I consider that most of these expressions are adopted either by the New Testament, or the Evangelical Prophets, I tremble at your throwing them together, as if you was resolved to make the Songs of Sion ridiculous. The clerk's leading the people into the strong city through the land of Gebal, Ammon and Amalek is impertinent; you find your work its true, but in very distant psalms, nor is there any mention of Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, as a road for our journey, but as the enemies of the church. His bringing them into the "court of burnt offering" is not the language of David, but "your imitations." That our duties, praises, charities, and persons, are all sacrificing dues, learn from the last words of the spirit to the churches; and where should we bind with cords, but to the horns of the altar? for we have an altar as the apostle has told us, Heb. xiii. 10. Does it say of him as you do of David, that these are the words of Paul the Jew? That our entering into the temple, should they be exposed, is very shocking to any one who knows that the typical part of the Jewish religion was their gospel; and may my soul be thus bedarkened, if you will call it so, with the smoke
of

of incense; for it is with much incense that the prayers of the saints are offered up; what you call a covering with Jewish veils, I hope we have found to be a getting within the veil; and when we do so, all the words of the Lord are pure, there is nothing froward or perverse in them.

This is not the only offensive passage in the book; I have observed almost one hundred. And though it is left almost entirely of the same complexion in your later editions, yet that nothing might be lost, you have taken care to tell your readers, that they shall be gathered up again in your Treatise of Psalmody; these are your “satyrical flourishes” that I complained of. You have shewn a thousand times more meekness to an Arian, who is the enemy of Jesus, than you have done to king David, who sung his praises; whose Psalms you have been so free as to call an “artful compofure” in several of your writings—a wretched word!

As to what concerns Mr. Price, I shall only observe, that though he has been guilty of rudeness to all the ministers, insolence, treachery, and falshood to me, yet he can clear himself sooner with three words, than I am able to do with three sheets of paper. You can disbelieve, or dismiss a number of misdemeanors in him, and yet the prejudice you have conceived against me is like to stick,

stick, as appears by your last paragraph. You say, "that after all my censures (which I have taken so much pains to deny) you can forgive, and shall continue to carry it towards me as becomes a christian brother, and faithful servant for Christ's sake;" but what did you mean by your next words, "unless my carriage renounce all such sort of relations?" that is an undoing dash, and as it seems to be writ at a different time from the rest of your letter, I am afraid it is a revolting of your charity. In this I have the confidence to say, that I never renounced these relations, yet I am convinced it is out of my power to make you think so.

There is one passage in your enclosing letter, "that you was always for peace." Let me only observe to you, that he who denies the truth, or if you had rather have it called so, who *explains* a mystery by seeking out many inventions, is the man who breaks the peace of churches. Divisions are caused by them who teach contrary to the doctrines that we have received. And, I hope, they who continue to defend the things they have learned, have as good a claim to the title of peace-makers, as they who destroy the foundations.

Your profession of "seeking the truth" is very popular, and I do not wonder to find it so often in
all

all your writings, but then, is there such a thing as ever learning and not being able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And it is pity, after you have been more than thirty years a teacher of others, you are yet to learn the first principles of the oracles of God. What will our hearers think of us, when we succeed the greatest men of our last age in nothing else but their pulpits? Is there no certainty in the words of truth? Was Dr. Owen's church to be taught another Jesus, that the Son and Holy Spirit were only two powers in the divine nature? Shall the men who planted and watered so happy a part of the vineyard, have all their labours rendered in vain? Shall a fountain at the same place send forth sweet water and bitter? What need is there of a charge, *μὴ ἐπεοδιδασκαλεῖν*.

Alas! the passage you refer me to in your last book has made me still more of the opinion, that with them the divinity of Christ evaporates into an attribute. For, though I abhor all similitudes of the divine nature, as a breach of the second commandment; it is making to ourselves the likeness of what is above; yet in your resembling the being of God by the soul of man, the plain drift of your whole imagination is to destroy a trinity of persons.

Pray,

Pray, Sir, believe that your books have given great offence to ministers and hearers. I do not remember that I ever met with one serious person who had read your Dissertations, that did not express himself in stronger terms against them than I have done. Several letters have I received upon your conduct; and one very eminent preacher quotes a passage in Calvin's letter to Socinus, *Liberale ingenium, quod tibi Dominus contulit, non modo in rebus nihili frustra occupari, sed exitiis figmentis corrumpi, vehementer dolet.*

I am assured that your resentment is directed against others as well as me: I have seen one of your complaining epistles to another minister; in which there is almost a transcript of what I received. Do you think that the ministers of London are to stand still while you tear in pieces eight great articles of their faith? and must every one who answers your arguments be accused of "personal reflections?" Though I know none of them but who has a true love for you, yet they do not think you of that importance, that, on purpose to keep up their friendships with you, they shall be silent to so great a denial of the chief doctrine that they have either learned or taught; and, if you resolve to call their zeal for the truth in question as you have done mine, I know none so guilty of "personal reflections" as yourself.

I

You

Yow see how quickly I answer yours, and, though all who knows me can tell with what reluctance I come into the toil of writing letters, yet as you have led me into it, I shall never fail to let you know that I am not ashamed of the cause in which God has engaged me, nor will do any thing unbecoming the character of, Sir, your hearty friend and humble servant,

THO. BRADBURY.

From

From Dr. WATTS to the Reverend Mr. THOMAS
BRADBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

Lime-street, March 15, 1725-6.

WHAT you are pleased to call “an epistolary war,” was not begun by me; and I persuade myself, that if any indifferent persons should ever read the letters that have passed between us, they would readily determine where the spirit of war appears, and where the spirit of peace. Surely, Sir, if yourself would review them in your most calm, most serious hours, you would judge in the same manner. The many hard words in your last letter give me reason to fear, that my peaceful attempts and expectations are vain, while instead of acknowledging any personal reflections you are pleased to vindicate them all as just and proper, and add more to them.

I hope, Sir, I have always taken your caution, and not made “the bar of God a handle to my resentments,” though you tell me this is “too often a common place of anger and scolding:” I hope a man may mention the judgment seat of Christ, without any ground for such imputations.

I confess I knew not before what you now tell me, “that it was your tenderness for my peace,” that made you take no notice of any thing I had

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written

written with regard to the Lord Barrington; and that " Mr. Clarke insulted you for this partiality to me." I am very sorry that any degrees of respect to me, which I always readily acknowledge, should expose you to the insults of any of my friends or yours: and I am well assured, that as in those days I spent almost all my time at Theobalds, under much meekness, so I wrote nothing but what with uprightness and honesty of heart, I designed for the service of the dissenting interest; and declared at the same time, that I was no partisan of my Lord Barrington's in that subscribing contest; however, in my judgment, I thought him a very fit representative for a town which had many dissenters in it.

The passage you cite out of the first edition of my Hymns, was printed about nineteen or twenty years ago, and had I ever reprinted that Essay, I should have retracted that sentence, and I now condemn it.

As for my attempts to maintain the new and essential deity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, I have often examined my own heart, and am not conscious to myself, that the pride and fondness of novelty has led me into any particular train of thoughts; and I beg earnestly, that he that knows all things would search and try me in this respect. My only aim has been to guard this doctrine
against

against the objections and cavils of men, and to set it in the most defensible light; and if I can see that done in any other form, I shall rejoice to bury all my papers in oblivion, or, if you please, to burn them all.

My weaknesses of nature are so many, and perpetually recurring, that I am often called to look into the other world, and would not dare to write any thing that might derogate from the divine ideas, which scripture ascribes to God my Saviour, and my Sanctifier.

But I am very unwilling to give any occasion for any more tiresome letters, as you call them, on either side. Farewel, Sir, and forgive the trouble you have received of this kind from one, that in all these letters endeavoured to shew how much he was, Sir, your sincere friend and humble servant,

I. W A T T S.

P. S. March 16. On a review of what I had written in the first paragraph, I suspect you may demand, what personal reflections there are in all your last letter? give me leave, Sir, to point you to some of them.

1. You charge me with vanity in the frontispiece of my first book of the Trinity, and “an insult upon the many authors who had lately writ on that subject.” Now, Sir, I think I may be bold to say, that I had no such thought in my heart: but when I wrote for private christians, I chose to avoid enter-

tering into any schemes or explications, and wish I had avoided it more in that book.

2. You charge me with a *horrid* practice, that is, “ threatening you with the higher judgment of God.” I think my words carry nothing of threatening or horror in them.

3. That “ I come off with a creeping, ill-natured proviso.”

4. You accuse me of “ burlesquing the poetry of the most high God :” whereas I only shewed the impropriety of using even inspired forms of worship, peculiarly Jewish, in Christian assemblies, and assuming them as our songs of praise to God; though I have confessed to you that I condemn the manner in which I have expressed it in the offensive sentence which you cite.

5. That “ I have shewn a thousand times more meekness to an Arian, who is an enemy of Jesus, than I have done to king David.”

6. That “ I have been more than thirty years a teacher of others, and that I am yet to learn the first principles of the oracles of God.” Here first you miscount the number : it is but twenty-seven years since I began to preach ; and then, though the doctrine of the Trinity is a first principle, yet I never knew that the particular mode of explication was such a first principle also.

7. You tell me “ that the plain drift of this whole imagination, viz. of resembling the being
of

of God by the soul of man, is to destroy a Trinity of Persons." Now I have often freely declared, and still declare, that I allow the greatest distinction possible between the sacred Three in the divine nature, which does not arise to three distinct conscious minds or spirits. Make it as great as you will short of this, and I acquiesce in it. But then since three distinct conscious minds is the true idea of three proper literal persons, whatsoever falls short of this can be but an analogical personality; yet if any man will call this a proper divine personality, though it is but similar to human personality, I will not contend about words and names.

And whereas I have sometimes called the *word* and *spirit* in the divine nature, two distinct powers or principles of operation in the Godhead, yet I have in many places told what I mean, viz. that the idea of distinct powers, or principles of operation, being the greatest distinction that we can conceive in one spirit, it is the nearest analogical idea of the sacred Three that I can arrive at, always supposing there may be some unknown distinctions in the divine nature, greater than the ideas we have of the powers or faculties in the soul of man. If I have either given you or any one else occasion to understand me in a different sense from what I now declare, I should be glad to retrieve any such mistake of my meaning.

From the Reverend Mr. THOMAS BRADEURY to
Dr. WATTS.

REVEREND SIR,

March 17, 1725-6.

I Stand amazed at the first line in your last letter, in which you say that this epistolary war was not begun by you. Did I write a syllable to you, till yours had been sent above six weeks? And you know the reason why I set pen to paper at all, viz. the ungentle language of your brother, by whom I thought to have conveyed my defence in a way the most agreeable to you.

That first letter contained a most infamous charge, which I will now take the liberty to call a personal reflection upon me; and therefore I might have expected that an accusation so loaded, would either have been maintained or retracted. You accuse me of "persisting in public reflections on your writings, in such a manner as makes it sufficiently appear that I design reproach to the man." Of this you are "abundantly informed, and need not rehearse particular instances." You intreat me afterwards, as a brother, to consider whether "all this wrath of man can work the righteousness of God," and insinuate that great "degrees of passion and personal resentment had mingled themselves with my supposed zeal for the gospel." You charge
me

me afterwards with “ publick reproaches and unmerited indignities ;” and tell me that Christ will not approve what I have done to the “ personal disgrace of my brethren.” You wish it “ but possible” that I could look upon my own conduct, “ abstracted from a fondness for self.” You hint at the occasion there is for “ humbling and penitent thoughts in the sight of God.”

If there is not the “ spirit of war” in a charge of reproaches, indignities, reflections, personal resentments, and disgraces, I shall never expect to find it. The man who is guilty of what you believe against me is very unfit for the pulpit ; nor can I suppose any conduct to be more scandalous in a minister, than what you have represented mine to be : either by this account I must be above measure sinful, or you have taken a great deal of liberty with my character. I told you, with an abhorrence of the crime, that I was very remote from any approaches to it. I expected your proof of the indictment ; and instead of particular instances, antecedent to your first letter, you bring them out of some passages in my last ; so that your accusation is of a prophetic nature. You charge me with what I had formerly said, your evidence is from what I should hereafter write.

That I was offended at your notions about psalmody, and the personality of Christ Jesus, I never

did deny : that I delivered myself upon those subjects, when they came in my way, in a different cast of thought from you, I freely own : but that ever this was done with indignity to your character, or hatred of your person, I denied at the first hearing, and was in hopes that the zeal with which I did it, might have been your conviction. For that reason, I desired you not to be so easy with tale-bearers, who take the advantage of your recluse, afflicted life, to irritate your spirit, and make your jealousy to be the tool of their own envy.

I knew in my own soul, there was scarce a person in the world upon whom my affections were more fixed in esteem, in benevolence, in sympathy, and delight. But when I told you this, you give it all an outward turn. If I mention your amiable character, that you make no better than a “screen of reproach :” if I profess my fear of grieving you, that you will not believe, “till you see it practised.” When I take so much pains to be owned by you as a friend and a brother, you insinuate “my renouncing all these relations.”

This desperate way that you had thrown me into, this contempt of all my professions, desires and arguments, made me think you very unreasonable ; and in that view of your tenacious aversion I writ my last letter, in which I express myself in a way I never would have taken with a person who is to be persuaded of my innocence.

You

You have been an ear witness to the ill usage I have had : you have heard the revilings of many against me : some of them you condemned, in particular the rudeness of Mr. Travener, to which I gave him no provocation. You know the run that was made upon my character, as if it would have been fatal to charity and moderation to let me have any share in it ; and I shall fear that these men, who walk in flanders by flattering you, have spread a net for your feet, but to me their ways are always grievous.

I am glad that you dislike that passage in your book of hymns that has been so wounding to me ; and I think you owe the world a public retractation. There are several others that are equally offensive ; I do not mean only in the argument, but in the language. I read with terror your assertion, that the Psalms of David are shocking to pious ears. Such a notion as that lets in deism like a flood : but I will not debate this matter in private epistles.

I see no reason you have to number the seven particulars in my last letter among personal injuries. I believe every reader would have formed the same judgment of your expressions. I am surprised at my mistake in the length of your ministry, I always supposed you to be my senior, and it is now very near thirty years since I began to preach, and I have been more than one hundred times every year in the pulpit.

I am

I am afraid what you say about your letter to Berwick will be no softening to the mighty encomiums you give of Lord Barrington. I do design to draw up the whole story, because I am very sensible what I did in those matters have opened the rage of tongues against me.

I wish you would satisfy me about a suspicion that I have had of your unkindness: if you deny the story, I will discharge every imagination upon that head. It is this; my Lord Grange of Scotland told me, that a minister in this city assured him, it was my usual way to bring personal affairs into the pulpit. He inveighed against the practice, and I against the charge. I know he visited you, and I was afraid he might have the report from you; but as he mentioned no name, I cannot fix it upon any one person. Your disowning it will be conviction enough to me. I am, Sir, your obedient faithful servant,

THO. BRADBURY.

From

From Dr. WATTS to the Rev. Mr. BRADBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

Lime-Street, March 18, 1725-6.

I AM quite tired with this *epistolary war* (as you please to call it) I desire this letter may entirely finish it ; and I thought I might roundly say, I never begun it, when your letter to the board at Lime-Street was partly directed to me as a member of that board, and contained a whole page or two relating to me, which gave occasion to my first writing.

And since, Sir, you allow nothing in that letter or in your public writings to be a “ personal reflection,” I easily supposed it was in vain to attempt to cite any reports of other persons which you would allow to be personal reflection ; and for that reason, as well as others, I avoided it, though my informations were not few.

I am always ready to acknowledge whatsoever personal respect Mr. Bradbury has conceived for one of so little merit as I can pretend to : but I knew not how to reconcile the profession of so much respect with so many and so severe censures, and with such angry modes of expression as you have been pleased to use both in print and in writing.

The chief thing that engages me to return this answer, is to assure you that I do not remember that I had any conversation at all with my Lord Grange about you ; much less that I ever told him, “ it was your usual way to bring personal affairs into the pulpit.” My lord never did me the honour of more than one visit ; which was but a little before his departure. Yet I hope you will forgive me if I venture to tell you, there are so many ministers as well as private christians in this city, who have conceived such an opinion concerning your practice, that my Lord Grange might very easily “ hear such a report from a minister,” without ever seeing me at all.

Once more farewell, Sir, and let us examine concerning what is past, and take care for the time to come, that what we write or print with regard to our brethren, be expressed in such language as may dare appear and be read by the light of the last conflagration, and the splendor of the tribunal of our returning Lord.

Take this final and friendly valediction from one who has endeavoured to follow this rule in these letters, and to approve himself to God and you, as your faithful servant, for Christ's sake,

I. WATTS.

From

From the Reverend Mr. THOMAS BRADBURY to
Dr. WATTS.

REVEREND SIR,

March 22, 1725-6.

THE letter which I writ to Lime-street, contained a very true account of those abuses that I met with at that board from Mr. Clark, Mr. Neale, and Mr. Price; I was in hopes that if those persons thought they had done me an injury, either by their own indignation, or the direction of such as knew your case, they would have confessed what was past, and given some assurance that a man might sit among them with security and decency for the time to come. I might have taken notice in my complaint, of the fury that appeared both in your countenance and language, when you gave me that uncivil interruption. In truth, my friend, you are a man of like passions with your brethren; and perhaps want to enquire as well as I, what spirit you are of. There was not very much of a christian meekness in your behaviour at that time. I am far from excusing any warmth of temper in myself; but your anger and mine are visibly distinguished upon the head of one circumstance, that I have had as much provocation and you as little from treacherous men and false brethren, as any ministers in England.

To

To this letter I had no answer for six months; and as I was amazed that you charged me with beginning this epistolary war, so I am quite confounded at the way you take to prove it, for what you say in your last letter is a flat contradiction to one paragraph in your first, viz. "that you designed never to have taken any notice of that letter, if you had not been abundantly informed that my conduct since is of the same kind:" so that, if I understand what you complain of, it is my abusing you with "personal reflections" from the pulpit and in conversation, this "you was abundantly informed of." I wanted to know, (and have a right to demand it) both the information and the informer. The practice would be scandalous in me, the charge without an equal evidence is so in you.

You have brought a railing accusation against your brother, and acted beneath the manner of the Romans, who never condemned any man till he and the accuser were brought face to face. I observe what an easy thing self-defence is in Mr. Price, and how hard it is for me. It is my turn now to tell you of a more righteous judgment, that never goes by hearsays or may be's, but will proceed upon the royal law, and find out the wickedness of those who bear false witness against their neighbours.

I did

I did believe, if you had been so fair and upright as to mention any particulars, I might have had it in my power to shew you the villainy of the whispering and backbiting that has obtained among us. Your brother told me of one sentence that I am said to deliver at Pinner's-hall, which I do not remember, nor do any of those whom I enquired of; I therefore suppose it lies at the door of falshood and prejudice, and was supplied by the sorry faction who clubbed to the "Appeal." In that book is an instance, that we have both laymen and masters of arts, who can be inventors of evil things. I had, indeed, such a confidence in your easiness to be intreated, that I made no doubt to convince you of my innocence. But, I declare, you have cured me of the opinion I entertained both of your meekness and your impartiality. I must now dispel my fears that you have conceived a personal resentment against me, and I will freely lay open my jealousy to your own examination.

You have known for many years what an uncommon affection I had for you; perhaps no person more valued your worth or pitied your weakness; and when I thought it my duty to express different actions from yours, upon a doctrine that I believe and adore, I desired you to peruse and correct my papers; I offered twice either to send them or bring them: and, whatever bitterness

ness you may think there is in them, I had more blotting out of harsh expressions, more interpolations of softening ones in those few pages, than in all the book besides. Again, I challenge any one to say, that I ever spoke of you without a personal favour. Many that have heard me, own that I take you to be wider from the common doctrine about the person of Christ than Dr. Clark or Mr. Emly : know that I have always larded those complaints with a character of your serious and humble temper. Lastly, when you charged me with abusing you by “personal indignities”; I received it with astonishment; I declared against it; I condemned the practice; and, upon any evidence of guilt, would have condemned myself.

I cannot forbear saying, all this, and a great deal less, would have done to a man of christian charity. I do not mean by charity a lukewarmness in the cause of God, but a principle that is not easily puffed up or provoked, and that seeks not its own. Had this been your spirit, you would not have rejoiced in iniquity : Charity (I mean that of the old sect) would have made you believe all things; it is a cross-grained new schemed charity that believes all things against a man; and nothing for him. Had you acted without partiality and without hypocrisy, you would have sown the work of righteousness in peace. Examine your ways with
me,

me, by the resolution of David, " Who so privily flanders his neighbour, him will I cut off:" had a proud heart and a high look been as intolerable to you as it was to him, you would have writ otherwise to Berwick, and otherwise to Charterhouse Yard. As low an opinion as you may have of my conduct, I have spoke the truth from my heart, I have hated the work of those that turned aside: and had not you encouraged this backbiting with the tongue, and taken up a reproach against your neighbour, I should not have had vain repetitions of complaint, without evidence, over and over again: I should either have known my guilt, or you would have known my innocence. But you have had insinuating conversation with such as do all they can to weaken my hands; and, in order to it, give their mouths to evil. Whether you have admonished, reprov'd, and condemned the flanders they have uttered against me, as you do the supposed injuries that I have given to you, will be examined by him that sits in the throne judging right.

You should have left off contention before it was meddled with, for I doubt not to open to the world your shame. You have given ear to a naughty tongue. Had you not suffered flattery to yourself to be the vehicle of a reproach against me, you would have cast out the scorner, and then strife and contention

must have ceased. But those words of tale-bearers that gave so many wounds to your friend, you have received into the innermost parts of your heart : and, because they could introduce themselves with a compliment to your writings, you have encouraged these burning lips and wicked hearts, merely because the potsherd was covered with silver drop : away with such an ungenerous conduct ! Had my brother used your character as your favourite has done mine, he should either have humbled himself to you, or have known his distance from me.

Now, after all the injustice you have done me, without either the proof or the retraction of a most dreadful charge, you are for dropping it : but that I shall not do ; I learn no such passive obedience to an unreasonable adversary, but rather the contrary from a man that kept the faith : I say, as he did, “ They have beaten us openly and uncondemned, and now do they think to thrust us out privily.” Are you at liberty in four letters to cast abroad firebrands, arrows, and death, and in the fifth to drop all the accusation, as if you was only in sport ? Was you making an experiment upon my reputation and peace ? Let me say as you do, that I love a spirit of meekness, and an inclination to peace, “ when I see them practised.” And I am unwilling to own a person as a brother and a friend, “ unless he renounces those relations.”

tions." It is nothing to me with what affectations of mildness you are pleased to write : it is possible enough for *the words to be smoother than butter when war is in the heart : for words to be softer than oil, and yet to be drawn swords.* Psalm lv. You have left out those passages in your Psalm-Book, " as not suiting with the spirit of the gospel," but I hope they will ever be in mine.

Upon the whole I do assure you, that if I have not what is equivalent to the copy of my indictment ; if you do not tell me what you have heard, and who it is that has told it to you, I shall number you among those that walk in slanders, the railers, the false accusers, who have no honourable apology for their head, and a prophet that tells lies for their tail.

I am satisfied with the account you give me of your conversation with my Lord Grange, but there was no occasion when you had said a thing that pleased me, to close it with a sting, " that many ministers and private christians conceive such an opinion of me, as that valuable person had heard, viz. that I bring private affairs into the pulpit." It is a sign what sort of hearers those ministers and private christians are, not doers but judges of the law. They are doing the devil's work, who by spreading such a report may harden sinners against conviction. For, though this is a common charge as you very well know, yet I

do not know any thing that does more harm, and very often it is as false against the preacher, as it is always dangerous to the hearer. I durst never encourage those insinuations upon others. Mr. Clark once accused me of directing a whole sermon against him, though I believe he was never once in my thoughts when I either studied or preached it. But, if ministers are resolved to scatter those evil surmifings against one another, it can end in nothing less than giving mankind an abhorrence of our persons, and a contempt of our errand. I hope I can truly say, quite through, that labours of thirty years, that have been more abundant than most of my standing, that I have endeavoured neither to walk in craftiness, nor handle the word of the Lord deceitfully. I am sorry that I must now subscribe myself your abused and injured brother,

T. BRADBURY.

From

From Dr. WATTS to the Rev. Mr. BRADBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

Lime-Street, Nov. 1, 1725.

ON Friday night last my worthy friend and neighbour Mr. Caleb Wroe called on me at Theobalds, and desired me to convey the inclosed papers to you, with his humble thanks for the share you have given him in the late legacy intrusted with you : and he intreats that you would please to pay the money into the hands of this messenger, that I may return it to him ; and I cannot but join my unfeigned thanks with his, that you are pleased to remember so valuable and pious a man in your distributions, whose circumstances are by no means above the receipt of such charitable bequests, though his modesty is so great as to prevent him from suing for an interest in them.

But while I am acknowledging your unexpected goodness to my friend, permit me, Sir, to enquire into the reason of your unexpected conduct toward myself in so different a manner. It is true, I live much in the country, but I am not unacquainted with what passes in town. I would now look no further backward than your letter to the board at Lime-Street, about six months ago, where I was present : I cannot imagine, Sir, what occasion I had given to such sort of censures as you pass upon

me there, among others which you are pleased to cast upon our worthy brethren : nor can I think how a more pious and christian return could have been made by that board at that time, then to vote a silence and burial of all past contests, and even of this last letter of yours, and to desire your company amongst us as in times past.

I had designed, Sir, to have never taken any further notice of this letter, if I had not been abundantly informed that your conduct since is of the same kind : and that you have persisted in your public reflections on many of my writings in such a manner, as makes it sufficiently appear, that you design reproach to the man as much as to shew your zeal against his supposed errors. The particular instances of this kind I need not rehearse to you ; yourself are best acquainted with them.

And yet after all this, I had been silent still, but as I acknowledge God and seek him in all my ways, so I am convinced it is my duty to give you a private admonition : and, as a brother, I intreat you to consider whether all this wrath of man can work the righteousness of God ? Let me intreat you, Sir, to ask yourself what degrees of passion and personal resentment may join and mingle themselves with your supposed zeal for the gospel ? Jesus the searcher of hearts, he knows with what daily labour and study, and with what constant addresses

addresses to the throne of grace, I seek to support the doctrine of his Deity as well as you, and to defend it in the best manner I am capable of: and shall I tell you also, Sir, that it was your urgent request among many others that engaged me so much further in this study than I at first intended. If I am fallen into mistakes, your private and friendly notice had done much more toward the correction of them than public reproaches. I am not conscious to myself that either my former or latter conduct toward you has merited such indignities as these; nor can I think that our blessed Lord, who has given you so rich a furniture of imagination, and such sprightly talents for public service, will approve of such employment of them in the personal disgrace of your brethren that own the same faith, that preach the same Saviour, and attempt to spread abroad the same doctrines of salvation.

I wish, Sir, it were but possible for you to look upon your own conduct abstracted from that fondness which we all naturally bear to self, and see whether there be no occasion for some humbling and penitent thoughts in the sight of God. It is not the design of this writing to carry on a quarrel with you. It has been my frequent prayer and it will be my joy to see your temper suited to your work, and to hear that you employ your studies

and your style for the support of truth and godliness in the spirit of the gospel, that is, in the spirit of meekness and love. And I conclude, with a hearty request to heaven, that your wit may be all sanctified, that you may minister holy things with honour and purity and great success, and that you may become as eminent and public an example of piety, meekness, heavenly mindedness, and love to all the saints, as your own soul wishes and desires. Farewel, Sir, and forgive this freedom of your humble servant, and fellow labourer in the gospel of Christ,

I. WATTS.

From

From the Reverend Mr. THOMAS BRADBURY to
Dr. WATTS*.

REV. SIR,

Charter-house, Dec. 23, 1725.

I WAS in great hopes to have prevented both you and myself the trouble we may find in an answer to your letter, by conveying my thoughts in a free discourse with your brother, which yesterday I had an opportunity of doing. I read him part of your letter, and assured him, as I went along, that I was far from deserving the hard opinion you had conceived of me. But he was pleased (in a language which I thought it below both him to give and me to take) to convince me, that he was no proper messenger of my vindication to you.

I am therefore obliged to take this way very much against my will, because I do it with a fear that you may be more uneasy at some expressions than I ever designed to make you. Though, upon that head, the Doctor has delivered me from a great deal of my pain, for he intimates that you treated the preface to my late book in such a way, as it was not in my power to give you much trouble; by which I perceive, the abundant care I had not to grieve your spirit, might all have been spared.

* For the answer to this letter, see p. 177.

The

The first thing you complain of is "passing censures upon you and your worthy brethren," in a letter that ought either to be answered sooner than in six months time, or not at all. The censures I cast upon one of "your worthy brethren" are for tale-bearing, dishonourable conversation, separating me from an old friend, using me with treachery and rudeness, as he has already used all the subscribing ministers, venturing to call them coxcombs; I am sorry, when you know all this to be true, that the man who did the injury is your favourite, and he who suffered it your abhorrence.

As to your other "worthy brethren," you may remember what a flame they put themselves into upon a very old story of Lord Barrington's election. You are now apprised that one of the ministers at the board was a contributor of some pages to a book as full of personal reflections and low dirt as any I ever read. Therefore I hope you will agree with me, that I have *suffered* as much by railing accusations as any one; and, if your charity is of that sort, that you will consider me as yourself, I have a claim to more of your pity than your indignation. For, as to your insinuation that I treated you, with whom I had no quarrel, as I did those who had abused me in language and actions much beneath the dignity of their character, I do utterly disavow it. Nor can I imagine

gine what there is in that letter that you are capable of laying your charge upon, when I actually call you one whom I have always loved as a person of the best parts, and most unfeigned seriousness I ever knew.

I mentioned also, what I can at any time prove, and they must be very *unworthy brethren* if they deny it, that "I have heard worse things from some of that board than I ever spoke or writ, upon your books of the Trinity, and your Funeral Sermons." It is added afterwards, "that I love you for qualifications which I shall never equal, and pity you for disorders that I often feel." I call you the best divine poet in England, and the liberty you have taken with David's Psalms, affirming "that they are shocking to pious ears," is a harsher phrase than ever I used of you.

I have heard your words called profane, impudent, pragmatical, and conceited, by ministers who have more of your good-will than I have, but I am pretty sure you have not so much of theirs as of mine. But, if after all that I have writ in that letter, I must there be accused of abusing you, I cannot but fear, that it is inclination that makes me guilty, and not evidence.

You tell me, what some at the fund deny, so that a mistake must be somewhere, that a vote was passed, (which I suppose will be determined by the

the books) that my company should be desired as in times past. This, I say, was contradicted when I once read your letter. But though you call this “a most pious and christian return” to pass such a vote, I must take this opportunity to tell you that worse names than these are owing to another part of your conduct, viz. inviting the two messengers of our church to sit without their pastor, against the fundamental constitution of the fund itself, and with a visible tendency to involve us in a quarrel at Fetter-Lane. This was pushing fore at us that we might fall, but the Lord has helped us.

Your next paragraph charges me with “public reflections on your writings, in such a manner as makes it sufficiently appear that my design is to reproach the man, as much as to be zealous against your supposed errors.” And you amaze me with saying, “that particular instances you need not rehearse, because I myself am best acquainted with them.” Alas! Sir, who has beguiled you? I do not know one instance in my whole life of such a carriage towards your person, or such a treatment of your reputation.

I deny the charge, I abhor the fact; I detest it as a villainous practice in the authors of the *Appeal* against me. Your admonitions upon this head are very good against the wrath of man, and be pleased to apply them when they are so visibly wanted

wanted among your "worthy brethren." I own all that you say, that you never gave me any occasion to use you ill, and believe me, dear Sir, I have given you no occasion to think I did.

Therefore, upon this affair, put on an angry countenance to drive away a backbiting tongue. Do not take up an evil report against one whom you used to esteem as an honest man. Believe not all words that are spoken.

I own, that my adherence to the things that I have learned and been assured of, has made me think in a very different way from what you have now printed, both about the Psalms and the son of David; and it will be too unkind in my goodnatured friend, and too cowardly in a free-thinking author, to stifle any opposition to his private sentiments, by giving it the name of "personal reflections." I have certainly the same right and the same obligation too to defend what I have believed from the beginning, as you have to undermine it: but if a zeal for what I regard as a fundamental doctrine, is to be called by these hard titles, it looks so like evil surmising, that I am sorry to find it in my friend, when he can no longer consent to what he once reckoned wholesome words.

Your last sentence lets me see in what a forlorn way I am with your charity. You wish it were "but possible for me to look upon my own conduct,

duct, abstracted from a fondness to self, and see whether there is not occasion for humbling and penitent thoughts in the sight of God." I should have hoped, that it was not impossible for a man to be unentangled with this same fondness for notions that he has received from others, which thousands in all ages have professed as well as he; and that the great danger of this vile humour had been in your case of *nostrums*, vanities of our own, illustrations and similitudes that we never saw in the mount, but dug out of a vain imagination; so that I promise myself upon second thoughts, you will not think the case so desperate in my way of talking, as others may suppose it is in yours; for you writ as if you thought that I was given up to a reprobate mind and a heart that cannot repent.

I dare not say so of you; for as I see in a great many particulars, you have not only contradicted others, but yourself, so I cannot think it impossible but that in your fourth book, if the world is to have so many, you will show yourself "abstracted from the fondness that we all naturally bear to self," and return to your more early thoughts about the person of Christ Jesus, which you received indeed by education, but had been professed by men of the first rate for learning and piety, such as I desire to follow, but ever despair to equal. I heard and saw the holy Sir John Hartopp, with tears running
down

down his cheeks, lament your opposition to Dr. Owen, which he imputed to an instability in your temper, and a fondness for your own inventions.

It is a right way that you acquaint me with your observing, and my employment, if that kind is so much below yours, that I am ashamed to tell you what I have done, viz. “ with daily labour and study, and constant addresses to the throne of grace, to seek to support the doctrine of Christ’s deity.” I have read that Socinus prayed seventeen times to know the meaning of one text, “ My father is greater than I.” It is well if some people, when they see your notions upon that subject so like to his, will not call a departure from the common faith an answer to prayer, and treat Dr. Owen’s arguments as if they did not belong to a doctrine according to godliness.

Your frequent prayer for me, that “ my temper, and stile, and wit, and sprightly imagination may be sanctified, &c.” is very kind: but if any one else had said this, after he had concluded it impossible I should be abstracted from a fondness for myself, I should fear he was only bringing a railing accusation before the Lord. Of you I hope better things; though what I am able to conclude from your letter, makes me fear you find it hard to lift up your hands for me without wrath or doubting.

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I can assure you, I am not behind-hand in hearty wishes, that your good temper may not be lost to those who are for the truth, whilst it is so very abundant to them who are against it: and that your poetical furniture may never make you suppose that the highest of human fancy is equal to the lowest of a divine inspiration; that you will learn to speak with more decency of words than the Holy Ghost teaches, and less vanity for your own, and never rival it with David, whether he or you are the sweet psalmist of Israel.

I can as truly deny as you do, that I design no quarrel. Whether God may call me to answer your books I know not; if he does, my way is clearer than once it was; and I hope, whatever Dr. Watts has thought fit to say, that I shall always use you as a friend, and do nothing unworthy of a christian, a gentleman, and a scholar, which he has ventured to say I have dropped in my last performance. This he told me of a book which he read hastily; but it is always a rule with me, the more hasty I am in reading a book, the less hasty I am in reviling it.

Farewel, dear Sir, remember former friendships, and let not new schemes ruin old acquaintance and endearments between you, and reverend and dear brother, your steady, hearty and real friend, your obedient and devoted servant,

THO. BRADBURY.

S E R M O N S

PREACHED AT

PINNER'S-HALL, 1707,

By I. WATTS, D.D.

VOL. II.

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S E R M O N S

PREACHED AT

PAUL N E R S H A L L 1797

B Y I W A T T S D D

VOL II

S E R M O N I.

ISAIAH lvii. 17, 18.

For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him : I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him : I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.

YOU have here an account of an antient, beloved, and privileged people of God, that seemed to offend by a perpetual backsliding. Jer. viii. 5. There was iniquity found amongst them in a departure from the Lord their God. They turned aside from the Lord through many lusts, and amongst the rest the love of money is named, *for the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, &c.* This prevailed in their hearts; this run through the whole course of their lives; this discovered itself in their actions: the Lord was angry and he chastened them with temporal punishments, *for the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth and smote him*; but this availed little, this was not sufficient to reclaim them, he therefore inflicted a spiritual judgment upon them, *I was wroth and I hid my face from them.* Yet still they went on frowardly in the way of their own hearts, turning from the liv-

ing God, and pursuing their own pernicious devices. Now mark what course God takes with them: Well, saith he, since nothing will do, since I have smitten, and they have not returned to me; since I have hid my face from them, and they have not sought after me; since neither temporal nor spiritual judgments have any force on them, I will take another method, I will overcome them with overflowing kindness: *I have seen his ways and I will heal him.* But he will be ready to wander again, therefore I will lead him: there have been many of this people that have begun to mourn under my chastisements, and perhaps their friends have mourned and grieved upon their account: I will restore joy unto them also; *I will lead him and restore comforts to him and to his mourners.*

This seems to be in short the meaning of the words, and though it is the latter verse I chiefly design to enlarge upon, yet now I shall be able only to run over the first, which I shall do by raising several doctrinal propositions.

First. The first doctrine I shall raise is this: Covetousness in the children of God is a provoking sin. Though the design of my choice of this text be not to insist upon this vice, yet it being mentioned as a particular instance, wherein the people of God of old had departed from him, I cannot but speak to it a little. And,

I. It

I. It provokes God, because it is a setting up an idol in the heart in the room of the living God. Col. iii. 5. *Covetousness which is idolatry.* We do not indeed, in our nation, make gods and images in the likeness of man, or any other form, and fall down and worship them; but there is another way of making gods of gold, even by overvaluing our treasure, and setting our hearts and affections in our chests where our money is. Now the Lord is God alone, and his glory he will not give unto another; he will not suffer inward spiritual worship to be paid to gold and silver. Covetousness was so hateful in the Apostle's eyes, that he saith it should not so much as be named in a christian church.

II. Covetousness is a provoking sin when found in the children of God especially; for it is a return to the earth after a sight and foretaste of heaven: such a backsliding is a contempt cast upon the glorious grace of God; it is a refusal of his benefits. Ye that are called to the fellowship of Christ, have ye not had some hope of an eternal everlasting inheritance? and do ye return to this world as your chief joy? Do you esteem your enjoyments in it your chief good? Have ye begun in the spirit, and will ye thus end in the flesh? Have ye an inheritance provided above, that fades not way, and do you again choose for yourselves short-lived possessions and inheritances that will quickly consume

away? Such a return to sensual and carnal lusts may well be provoking to that God that has once raised you out of that state. Such a contempt of the goodness of grace, of which you are made a partaker, must needs be displeasing to the almighty giver. Again,

III. It must needs be a provoking sin to God, because covetousness is an abuse of the creature, and a perversion of it from that end for which God gave it. He gave the good things of this world to be used and not to be hoarded up merely to be looked upon. Whatever comforts of life, whatever advantages, privileges, or talents God has been pleased by his kind providence to confer upon us whilst we are here, remember they are not our own, they are but lent us, and we must one day give an account what we have done with them: this is a sin that lies very secret in the heart, and perhaps it cannot be so well charged upon us by others as by ourselves. Let us then be the more strict in making an inward search in our consciences. The

Second doctrine is this: God's displeasure against his own people for sin, is often manifested by his strokes of temporal judgment. *I was wroth and smote him.* You have this very sin of covetousness represented as the occasion of severe judgments from God upon Jerusalem, upon his chosen people. Jerem. viii. 10. In the foregoing verses God had been

been charging his people of *holding fast deceit, and refusing to return*; and then he saith, *therefore I will give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them, for every one even from the least to the greatest is given to covetousness.* Those whom the father has once loved and given into the hands of his son, the father will always love, and the son will bear an eternal affection to them; but the father and the son may be displeased with them, and may smite those very children sometimes, that when enemies strike them, they touch him nearly. In the eighty-ninth Psalm, where the covenant of grace is gloriously displayed, as made with our Lord Jesus Christ for all believers, there are these afflictions brought into this covenant: *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* And the prophet Amos, chap. iii. ver. 2, tells the Jews in the name of the Lord, saying, *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will not punish you for all your iniquities.* As if he had said, I will not always take care to punish other nations when they are guilty of enormous crimes; I will not take so much pains to recover them, let

them sink into destruction : this is the language of God to every one here, You only have I known, you have I favoured above the rest of the world, and you have rebelled against me, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities. And this God doth to shew his own hatred of sin both before his own people and before the world. If those that are reconciled to God, by the blood of his son, should commit iniquities from time to time, that are visible to the eyes of the world, and there should be no sensible animadversions upon them for them, the wicked would say that God ceases to love holiness, he punishes not his people when they sin. No, saith God, my gospel shall appear to be a holy gospel ; if those very saints that I have taken into my bosom should offend me, I will make it appear to the world that I hate sin in them as well as I do in others, and I will punish it. There is a sort of governing instance, which Christ the king of the church exercises for the honour of his own law, and his own gospel, for the sake of his own and his Father's holiness ; and though it be not revenging justice, yet it is sometimes very terrible and severe. 1 Cor. xi. 30. There were several disorders practised by the Corinthians in their participation of the holy ordinance of the Lord's supper : *They come together, not for the better, but for the worse, one being hungry, and another drunken, &c.* Well, saith the Lord, by the apostle, *Examine yourselves,*
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lest ye come together unto condemnation; for whosoever shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the blood and body of the Lord; yea, he eateth and drinketh damnation to himself: which appears by the context to mean temporal judgments, viz. weakness, sickness, and death. Another design of God is to awaken his children out of their security, and to reclaim them from sin; for the design of afflictive providences upon the children of God, is to lead them back again to ordinances and obedience. Isa. xxvii. 9. *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and his sin taken away;* that is, this I will use as means to restore him from the power of sin which has now gotten the upper hand. And in Heb. xii. God gives us a large account how he chasteneth his people on purpose to make them return to him. Well then, when God smites us let us mourn to think that we by our transgressions should provoke him to take this method for the vindication of his holiness; and let each of us say, Lord, shew me wherein I have offended and I will do so no more. The

Third doctrine is this; that spiritual chastisements will very probably follow when temporal ones do not attain the end and reduce the backslider. I was wroth and smote him, but that had no effect, that was not sufficient to reclaim obdurate sinners; therefore, saith God, *I will hide me, I will withdraw*

draw my presence from you. If ye will walk contrary unto me I will walk contrary unto you, saith the Lord; you shall not feel the smiles of my countenance: the elect of God have a sense of this sort of corrections, which the world have not; and therefore such sort of threatenings, though they affect not the unconverted sinners much, yet they affect the saints of the most High: they that know what it is to have the face of God discovered to them, and to see his love, they are afraid of the hiding of it, and covering it with a thick cloud that they cannot see it. How doth Job complain; *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left-hand where he doth work, but cannot find him; and on the right-hand, but I cannot see him.* If one might paraphrase this in a gospel sense, it might be thus: I go forward in the paths I now go, but cannot perceive him; I look back to the paths I have already been, I recollect my former experiences, but cannot find him there. On his left-hand, where he works, I can see nothing of him, in any of his providences or dealings with me; or on his right-hand, in his gospel and grace, I can see nothing no where either in his works, his providences, his nature or his grace; he can hold no converse with him either in private or public duties, in reading, in prayer, in hearing when the word of God is spoken, the
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soul can see little of the glory of God in it. This is a heavy judgment indeed, and those souls that have been made to know God in truth, may feel some such experiences as these are, for when he hides his face, who can behold him? When he speaks trouble, who can give comfort? I might add further, that these sorts of judgments are more certain tokens of God's displeasure than any temporal corrections can be, for God may suffer us to loose much of our outward substance, and at the same time may communicate to us a most lively sense of his love and our interest in the unsearchable riches of Christ; and then he can hardly be said to punish us much, or in reality to afflict us: but when he hides his face, then, as Job saith, *He counts me for his enemy*, that looks so much like displeasure that it cannot be otherwise construed. The

Fourth doctrine is this; the way of man's own heart is to turn aside from God. *I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly turning aside after the way of his own heart*: this is the nature of man, this is the temper of a fallen creature, and so far as sin prevails in the saints, this is their temper too. To turn away from God our creator, is a turning from our life, in whom we live, move, and have our being: to turn away from God, who is our first cause, who is our last end; to turn aside from the spirit of God as the guide of our ways;
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to turn aside from the quickening grace of God, which is the life; and from his assisting powers, which is the help of our souls. But the turnings aside of a faint have something of a more aggravated nature in them, for he doth not only turn aside from a creator, benefactor, lawgiver, or preserver, but he turns aside from God his father, from Jesus his saviour, that has delivered him from the wrath to come; he turns aside from the spirit, the sanctifier that has begun a good work in his soul, and laid the foundation of eternal happiness there; and yet this is the very temper of a backsliding faint, for all sin is ours, all the holiness that is in us, in our hearts or lives is from God. The ways of man's heart are different from the ways of God's heart, and in this sense it may be said, *my thoughts, saith the Lord, are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways*; and we should say, O Lord, thy ways are holy, but our ways are unholy; thy ways are pure, just, and good, but our ways are polluted, defiled, and unrighteous. See here then what a vast difference there is between innocent and fallen man, innocent man was like to God, fallen man is assimilated to the fallen angel. See in the next place what a necessity there is of self-denial, if ever we would be restored from the ruins of our fall. We must turn away from our own inclinations if ever we would turn to God, for the way

way of man and the way of God are just contrary to one another. The

Fifth doctrine. It is possible for the children of God to turn aside further from him, even still while God is dealing with them in order to their recovery. *I was wroth for his iniquity, and I smote him, and hid my face from him; and after this he went on frowardly after the way of his own heart.* This is not the character of all christians; but I say there are some who run this length, they refuse to be reconciled after many methods that God has used with them. Some there are that tremble at his word, and no sooner do they hear the voice of the Lord speaking a word to them, return ye, but their hearts answer, Lord we return; such are the souls that dwell with God, with whom God dwells. He guides them with his eyes, one look of his eye turns them to himself. Again, there are others that have not so soft a temper that yet may be awakened with the first strokes of God's rod, and God has no need of laying on stroke after stroke. Others again are not sensibly touched till God begins to hide his face from them; they may be smitten and yet may not return back to the Lord; but when he hides his face, then they cry with Job, *Why hidest thou thy face, and countest me as thine enemy?* Some there are that must have both these inflicted upon them together, or else they will not return; they that are the best
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of saints may fall into this case. David was much afflicted with both these before he was awakened of his sin ; *Deep calls unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts, all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me.* So you find Jonah, when he had been commanded to deliver his message to Nineveh, he refused ; he went away frowardly after the way of his own heart. God was angry and hid his face from him ; God cast him into the sea, and ordered a whale to swallow him, and then he cries out, *I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord ; out of the belly of hell cried I, for thou hast cast me into the midst of the deep, into the middle of the seas ; the floods compassed me about, all thy billows and thy waves past over me, the waters compassed me about even to the soul, the depths inclosed me round, the weeds were wrapt about my head, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains of the earth.* Some there are whom Satan and their own corruptions get so much power over, that they go on notwithstanding all methods of recovery. Some, on the other hand, faint, and have no heart to worship God, they give over all as lost, they seem to be given up to everlasting backslidings, and return not in a long time, being pressed down by despair. Sometimes, indeed, the children of God grow more hardened after afflictions, but this looks so very like the character of rebels, that the world, nor they themselves, can be able

able to distinguish them. From all this I would make these two remarks :

I. That while we have good reason to hope that the grace of God was once wrought in truth in any soul, that though we should see them slide back strangely, we should not give them over for lost : the root of the matter may be in them still, there may be some spiritual life within, there may be some spark of grace still, though it seems to be buried under mountains and floods of corruption.

II. I would advise those that have ever had any hopes of the mercy of God, that they should not entirely despair though they have found this perverse temper of mind long prevailing : return, saith the Lord, for I am married to you. The last

Doctrine I shall mention is this ; that neither temporal nor spiritual chastisements have power enough of themselves to reduce a sinner to God : this is evident from the text ; for if all this could have restored Israel, then Israel had been restored in that verse, and there had not been the following verses written, and the reasons for it may be these three :

I. That afflictions of a temporal, or of a spiritual nature, do work only by way of persuasion, and have only a moral influence on the mind, and there is no moral argument whatsoever that is able to

to bring back a soul that is backslidden from God. Again,

II. Afflictions were never ordained of God for this end, to work grace in the heart, or to restore decaying grace without his spirit. True, they are happy instruments in the hand of his spirit, when his spirit pleases to use them, but the rod must not stand in stead of the hand that shakes it. Afflictions are only God's instruments, and he himself is the sovereign cause.

III. Grace must have the honour of every step in our way to heaven. God will not give his honour to any thing but himself, though sometimes he will confer grace while he uses the rod, yet sometimes he suffers them to backslide beyond the recovery of all afflictions whatsoever, to shew that my text must come in place. It is only the touch of the finger of God himself on our hearts that can turn us to himself. I would make two uses of this doctrine :

I. Of the exceeding power of remaining corruption even in the hearts of saints. We are not to think that sin is nullified when it first receives its mortifying wound, and this is not to be softened over with the name of mere infirmities, and thereby easily indulged and slightly thought of, for such goings back as these are deserving much harder names; the flesh or corrupt nature is very guilty

and deserves condemnation, though the law of God cannot provide it with justification; see here afflictions are unable to restore us unto God by reason of the flesh, of the sin and corruption that still remains in us, but it does not therefore follow, that we are guiltless, no, we are so much the more guilty. The

Second use is, that we should wonder that God has not cut us off with eternal destruction which he has used so many means with us, and yet not one of them has prevailed. O how should we glorify his sparing mercy, had we but a sense of the greatness of our sin in the continuance in such obstinate backslidings; but believe, believe still that he that has had patience enough to spare you all this while in rebellions, he has grace enough in his heart to recover you, and he has treasured up grace enough in his Son, and then you will be prepared for the next words, *I have seen his ways and will heal him, I will lead him also, and will restore comforts to him and to his mourners.*

S E R M O N II.

ISAIAH lvii. 17, 18.

For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him : I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his own heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him, I will lead him also: and will restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.

HAVING in the last discourse given you a large paraphrase of the first part of the words, I now proceed to this part, *I have seen his ways and I will heal him* ; from whence I would raise this doctrine: When no methods of chastisement, neither temporal strokes, nor the hiding of God's face will reduce a backslider, then God recovers him by a wondrous exercise of his sovereign grace. This is not God's common way of exerting grace towards his people, generally he accompanies his chastisement with his spirit, but sometimes he lets a soul run so far from him that no external methods of recovery will do ; then saith God it is time I should arise, *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him.* My design on these words is to awaken those by a gentle touch of divine mercy on whom the strokes of God's rod have been repeated in vain. And let such as are dead in trespasses and sins attend to this word of
almighty

almighty grace ; those that think themselves never so near to hell, though they are running from God, yet if God please he can heal them. In discoursing to these words, let us take this method ;

First, Let us consider what those ways are from which God intends to reclaim his people. *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him.*

Secondly, Consider the greatness of the grace of God, by the aggravations of this sin of backsliding.

Thirdly, How God beholds them. *I have seen his ways, &c,*

Fourthly, What is implied in healing them. *I have seen his ways, and will heal him.*

Fifthly, What methods God takes to heal them, when all outward methods of conversion have been used in vain.

First, What are those ways which the text mentions, *I have seen his ways, &c.* In general the text hints at an immoderate love of some finite created object ; *for the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him* : but what is said of this one sin may be said concerning many other sins, concerning any departure from the living God, whether the pursuit of the riches of this world, or the acquiring of honours amongst men, or the indulging of our flesh by sensuality and ease, or many of them together. When the thoughts are continually

nually running out after some created good that the soul has exalted too near to God ; when the will is continually pointing out after it, the desire and love are fixed upon it, and it has a greater aversion to what would hinder it of this created good than it has to sin and iniquity. When we are more anxious about these things than those of another world ; when this continues and abides on the mind for a season ; when all the powers of the body and soul are exercised in the pursuit after it. For though there is a secret love to God kept alive in the heart of the saints through all backslidings, yet sometimes the spark is so covered by ashes, that it cannot be discovered by themselves or others. *I have seen his ways, saith God, yet I will heal him.* I have seen that he loves the creature more than me, but yet I love him more than I do other creatures ; his love is weaned from me in a great degree, but my love was to him from eternity, and shall be with him to all everlasting : it is this eternal love of God the creator towards us that is the spring of his healing grace, when our love sinks down from the creator, and terminates upon the creature. This is the general character of the sin here mentioned, and it is accompanied with these four concomitants.

I. A forgetfulness of God in the course of his life. He doth not walk with God as he did before.

fore. His conversation is not in Heaven as once it was. One would think that this is something strange, that a saint should forget his God, that a child should forget his father: but I have seen these forgetful ways of his, saith God, and I will heal him; he has been ready to forget himself by forgetting me, but I will not forget him, I will have compassion on him; he has little to do with me now in all the affairs of life, but my eye runs to and fro through the earth to do him good; though he does not know it is his case, and his circumstances are before me, saith the Lord, whomever God has fixed his love upon, there is not one moment of God's duration that that soul is not fixed upon his heart; he remembers us with an everlasting remembrance.

II. As a tendency towards the creature introduces a forgetfulness of God, so it brings a negligence of duties towards God. For when the heart takes up with some created good, then there will not be that delight and satisfaction that there once was in duty; and when once the relish of a performance is lost, there will be a weariness in it; and when there is a weariness, there will follow a negligence in it, and gradually an omission of duties and worship will follow, and perhaps a total neglect of both public and private devotion. For a season a person may suffer a despairing thought so to prevail

as to neglect waiting upon God : yet, saith God, I will not neglect him, I remember him, and I will heal him ; he is grown weary of me, but I am not grown weary of my love to him, or of my kind concern for him ; there is a deadness and coldness in his heart when he draws nigh to me, but my heart has the same warmth of love to him as ever it had, though the manifestations of it are various, yet the spring of love is everlastingly the same. He has not called upon me in secret, but my eye is continually upon him there ; he has not waited upon me in public, though my blessings wait for him in Zion.

III. When the soul grows strong in this love towards some created object, and departs from God, it will be ready to go on in the contrary path. And this has been the experience of many christians, that when they have given a loose to their desires, in the pursuit of a lawful thing, too far, they have been left to fall into great and scandalous sins. Yet, saith God, though he walks contrary to me, I walk not contrary to him, I will turn my face to him now before he turns to me. *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him.*

IV. The creature may so far lose his God and the lively exercises of grace, and so far fall in with sin and a neglect of duty as to be uneasy at the thoughts of God. A despondency in his mercy,

will bring a murmuring at all his dealings, so as to say, Lord, why hast thou dealt thus with me? Yet, saith the Lord, still, though he be uneasy at me, I will not be uneasy at him, I think on him with pleasure, because I resolve to recover him; though he be unwilling to return to me I pity him, he knows not whither he runs when he runs from me, I will call him back; he may for a season look like one that is utterly dead in trespasses and sins, but it cannot be said as to a christian any otherwise but that he sleepeth. He looks like one that is dead in sins, but I will awaken him again; he is uneasy at the thoughts of me, but I will manifest myself to him with such love, as shall make myself the most delightful object of his thoughts; he shall receive my kindness with wonder and all thankfulness. He now murmurs at my dealings, but he shall see that all my ways are faithful ways, and all my dealings are dealings of love and kindness. It is sad, very sad, when he is fallen to this low degree of Christianity, but yet God has his healing methods.

Secondly, To shew the greatness of the grace that is contained in this text, let us consider what are the aggravations in their departure from God.

I. Great folly and stupidity to forsake the living, all-seeing God, and to pursue the creatures as though life were expected from them. It is such a

love that God calls to the inanimate creatures to stand amazed at it. Jer. ii. 12. *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; has a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? Pass over the isles and see, consider diligently if there be such a thing; but my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit: they become more brutish, saith the Lord, than any of the nations afar off:* and this is declared in words, very expressive of the highest folly, in Jer. v. 12. and following verses. Rebellion, revolting, turning aside from God to the creature, is an instance of such folly, that God has expressed it in such language as should make it appear to us the most obstinate, the most impudent, and the most hateful of all sins. Well, I have seen these follies, saith God, but I will restore the fools and give them wisdom again.

II. There is also great ingratitude; not only they sinned against much light, but against much love, when they departed from God after he has once manifested himself to them. *Have I, saith God, been a wilderness to thee, or a land of darkness that thou hast served me thus?* Jer. ii. 31. Have I been backward in shewing mercies, and yet how hast thou requited me? For one that has known God to turn away from him, for him to seek blessedness in the creature; for one that has frequently, and for a long

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time experienced my goodness, in a thousand instances, to forget and depart from me and seek the creature ; yet I can look over this, I have more love, and I will manifest more instances of it ; I will recover him from all this ingratitude, I will not cease to do him good, though he has been as it were trying to weary me out by his rebellions ; but I will not let it be wearied out, I will still shew mercy and recover him.

III. Stubbornness is another aggravation of this sin : an unwillingness to return after many methods used to reclaim him. This was the case in our text, that after God had used many ways to recover Israel, yet *he went on forwardly in the way of his own heart* : this is expressed in Jer. v. 3. *Thou hast stricken them, O Lord, but they have not grieved ; thou hast consumed them, but they refused to receive correction ; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return, &c.* God might be ready to say, and he does often say, *How shall I pardon thee for this, shall I not visit for these things, and shall not my soul be avenged of such a nation as this ? Go ye up upon her walls and destroy, but make not a full end.* I have a mind to make them return, therefore do not utterly destroy them, saith the Lord. A child sometimes manifests stubbornness long and in many instances, and yet the parent will not wholly turn him out of doors ; thus it is with God and sinners, we repeat

repeat our provocations, and God repeats his long sufferings.

IV. A multiplication of sins of many kinds will attend a departure from God. Though you have played the harlot with many lovers, yet, saith the Lord, return, &c.

V. It may be, there has been much dishonour brought to the name of God by it. My name has been continually blasphemed by you, saith the Lord, among all nations: yet he will heal, he will recover them, he will restore them again, and bring them near to himself. The

Third thing I proposed, in order to discover the greatness of this sin of backsliding, was to shew how God beholds it. *I have seen his ways, &c.*

I. He beholds our sins in all their number, more than we can see, imagine, or conceive of them. There is not a man upon earth that lives and sins not, and there is not a man upon earth that lives and knows all his sins; every thought, every word, every action, that has neither a direct, nor remote tendency to the glory of God, is written down as a sin in the book of God; who then knows his errors, but the Lord beholds them all, he knows our sinful thoughts afar off, before they are formed into purposes of sin; yet, saith he, I have seen them all, and I will heal them; his sins are many indeed, but I have a pardon for every one of them. I,
even

even I am he that blotteth out thy iniquities for my own name's sake.

II. God sees sin in the full evil of its nature, and yet he resolves to pardon, to recover, to restore and heal them. Now this is what we can never do, for we can never fully discover the greatness of the distance there is betwixt God and the creature; we can never know fully the greatness of that honour and glory that is violated by every sin; we cannot fully know the nature of God. Now every sin has a tendency to strike at the nature of God as well as against his law; though God beholds all the iniquity that is in any one of their departures from him, yet, saith he, I behold, and I will heal. One would think he should say, I will revenge, they are so great, but his thoughts are not as man's thoughts, nor his words as man's words. Again,

III. God sees our backslidings with all their complicated aggravations. He seeth that light against which we have sinned, and yet he resolves that he will pardon the wilful sinner. He sees all those methods of recovery, which he has used in order to recover us, and through which we have broken, yet still he resolves he will use other means that shall be available. He will bind us with bands of love, though other bands of love were not strong enough to hold us. Again,

IV. God

IV. God beholds all our sins at once. We can take cognizance of but a very few of our sins at one time, but God surveys, with one extensive view, all the iniquities that we ever were, are, or shall be guilty of; yet, saith the Lord, though I behold them all, yet will I heal them: And the reason why God can resolve to heal backsliders, even though he beholds their sins in all their number, in all their evil, and in all their aggravations, and all at once, is, because at the same time he surveys his own mercy, all his own compassion, all the righteousness of his own Son; so that though he has the fullest and most extensive view of all our evils that can be, yet he has a full view of his own mercy and compassion, and of the merits of his own Son; and he can say, without dishonour to himself, that he will heal them.

TWO WORDS OF CAUTION.

I. That the sins of saints are not less hateful in the eyes of God than the sins of the vilest sinners are, though he resolves to heal them. For sin cannot put off its vile nature any more than God can put off his nature of holiness; and therefore God looks upon all sin with an eye of hatred and displeasure, and sometimes more remarkably punishes his own children for sin, with temporal corrections; and I may say, all the sins of his own people are punished
more

more severely than all the sins of others are, or can be, because he has punished their sins upon his own Son, and has received a satisfaction equal to the offence.

II. That from this discourse Christians can take no encouragement to sin, or to go on and proceed in a backsliding course, because when they are fallen into such circumstances as these are in my text, they can have no reason to look upon themselves as believers, but to esteem themselves unconverted wretches. If they have any true grace in their hearts, yet it is at so low an ebb, that it cannot be discovered either by themselves or others; they are called to use their utmost diligence to seek after that God that is hidden from them, and to return to that God from whom they have departed.

SERMON

S E R M O N III.

ISAIAH lvii. 18.

I have seen his ways, and will heal him.

INOW proceed to the *fourth* thing proposed, and that is to shew what is implied in this word *healing*. Sin is supposed to be a distemper of the soul, and recovery from it is called healing. And thus you have it very often represented in the word of God, Isa. i. 5, &c. *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, they have forsaken their God, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more; and their character is, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, &c.* Man was at first created in a sound and healthy constitution of blood and spirit. The animal nature performed all its operations successfully, the spirit maintained all its performances happily too, but sin entered into human nature and spoiled the constitution of the flesh and spirit. There is an universal contest amongst the faculties of man, by nature; yet God has provided a mighty healer for it, the great Physician came down from heaven to earth to take care of
of

of them that were sick, and would apply themselves to him. And he represents himself in his own preaching under this character; by his spirit and his blood he has healed ten thousands already, and still continues to heal; but amongst all these patients there are some that relapse, they follow the creature after they have given up themselves unto the Lord; then, for the cure of their lusts, he takes up the incision knife, and, when healing medicines will not do, he takes up his rod; he uses cutting and burning; if that will not do, he is wroth and hides his face from them: but if they still go on perversely, then sovereign grace and love takes the case into its hand, and saith, I will heal him. I might bid my sword of vengeance awake; awake, O my sword, against the backslider! but I will let my sword alone, saith God, and lay aside my rod too. Justice would cut him asunder, but mercy desires a little delay. The vengeance of God is ready to say, Why is he not slain? I will destroy all mine enemies, but sovereign grace interposes, and the Lord saith, I pity him and his madness, and I will recover him to his right mind; I will have mercy, and heal him; I will not suffer him to destroy himself utterly. Such great grace as this is, is not manifested in every page of scripture; to me it seems a peculiar text, filled with mercy above most of its fellows in scripture.

Let

Let us then see what this kind word means. *I will heal.*

I. I will enlighten his darkened understanding. I have done it once already, saith God, but he has shut his eyes again: he is not sensible of his departure from me, but I will open his eyes to let him see at what a dreadful distance he is run from me, and he shall return to his Father again: he has forsaken the path of holiness, but I will shew him the path of holiness and display its beautiful character to him; he shall return to it once more. I might have cast judicial blindness upon him, but I will enlighten his eyes lest he sleep the sleep of death. Let every soul of us now say, hast thou ever been thus recovered? O! adore that grace that plucked you, though unwillingly, from the mouth of eternal torments.

II. *I will heal him*; that is, I will soften his heart. It was once hard as the millstone, and I softened it; or rather, I took it away and gave him another soft one; but now he has suffered hard scales to grow over it, and I might, indeed, pronounce sentence against him, and say, thou hast thus long hardened thyself against me, and be thou for ever hardened. But, saith God, I will have mercy, my bowels yearn within me, and my repentances are kindled together, and I will return him to his father's love again. He is fallen into
a spi-

a spiritual lethargy, cuttings and burnings I have tried, but he took no notice: well, I will now look upon him with an eye of love, and apply mollifying medicines, and make him relent in tears; he shall feel the power of my sovereign grace; the threatenings of my rod have no force upon him, but I will touch him with my finger, and then he shall read my epistle of love with gratitude and delight, and he shall feel every word that he reads. O! it is well for us, that we have such a God as this is, that can turn hearts into flesh when they have almost grown into stone the second time.

III. *I will heal him*; that is, I will turn his perverted will towards me again. It was once in a state of sinful nature, but I brought him near me, and he has forsaken his God again, and runs astray like a wild ass, snuffing up the wind; but I will recover him, saith the Lord, and bring him near to myself. Behold, I, even I, am he that blots out thy iniquities, and cancels thy transgressions for my own name's sake. Ephraim has turned aside from me like a backsliding heifer, but I will make Ephraim turn to me and say, Lord, do thou turn me, and I shall be turned.

IV. *I will heal him*. I will mortify his appetite to sin in general, and particularly to his beloved lust, to his dear idol. I might give him up to all

the lusts of his own heart, and might say to him, Rebel, what have I to do with thee? go on in sin, plunge thyself into endless ruin. But, saith the Lord, I will touch his heart and his tongue too, and I will make Ephraim cry out, Lord, turn me and I shall be turned. I might send him to the gods whom he has served, and say, go and find comfort from them; but I, even I, will be his God: I know how insufficient all creatures are for his relief: I will wean his heart from every other love; he has indulged a vicious appetite to forbidden and poisonous fruit, but I will prevent the spiritual mortality, and he shall sit under my shadow with great delight.

V. *I will heal him*; that is, I will renew all his inward passions, I will renew all his affections; I have done it once already, but he has almost lost the divine tincture, but I will restore it again. He has scattered his soul amongst a thousand vanities, but I will reassume all his faculties into my own hands, and I will create them all anew. He has hoped for peace in the neglect of duty, but I will teach him that there is no comfort in created things. I will sanctify his joy, his faith, his love, and his fear; he shall fear nothing but my displeasure, and his joy, his faith, and his love shall all make their God their centre. Thus I might
instance

instance in all the affections of the soul, for all of them have backslidden alike.

VI. *I will heal him*; that is, I will strengthen his powers to duty. I taught Ephraim to go, taking him by the arms, though now he has trodden the path of sin too long, and has forgotten his duty. And I will heal his infirmities, and restore strength to him again: he has brought forth no fruit for a long season, and henceforth shall no fruit grow upon thee for ever, might God say: but on the other hand, though we have been long fruitless, and cumberers of the ground, yet, saith the Lord, I am as the dew to Ephraim, and of me shall he receive power to bring forth fruit. The

Fifth thing I intend to speak to is, what means God uses to this end. Sometimes it is an unexpected word of grace and joy impressed upon their spirits in an immediate manner. This is given sometimes in reading, sometimes in hearing the word read or preached, sometimes in prayer, or in divine conference; or, it may be, sometimes in the affairs of this life; then all the soul melts while its beloved speaks, and there is a great turn wrought upon the spirit. God might say, ye are not my people, and I will not be your God, but he rather chuses to say, I am the Lord that heals you. God works sometimes a lively faith in the soul by a meditation on some single

word, and that purifies the soul. I said, saith the Lord, that thou hast backslidden far, that it will be hardly honourable for me to recover thee again; well, thou shalt call me thy father, and shall not go away from me, I will be thy God, I will be a father to thee; then shall thy heart answer by echo, thou art my God, thou art my Lord, my eternal compassionate father.

Sometimes, by a sweet revival of old experiences of divine love, and the soul thus argues with himself: Surely God was with me at such a time, and I was with God, and I committed myself into his hands for healing grace; surely then I loved the Lord, I had some intimations of his love to me; it is the same God still, his love is unchangeable, I will again return and put my trust in him.

Sometimes, by hearing the experiences of others, by conversing with Christians, by hearing of God's dealings with their spirits; of God's recovery of them from sins after their backsliding from him. These and many other ways has God in the secrets of his counsel. His methods of love are numberless, we cannot trace the paths of divine grace, they are various and hidden as the paths of his providence. The

Last thing I proposed to speak to is, why God doth this, why he suffers a soul to run so far from him, and after all reclaims him? Why God doth

not rather reclaim him at first by ordinary methods ?
to which I answer,

I. To shew the insufficiency of all outward means, and the sovereignty and necessary power of grace, God doth for the most part in the government of nature and of grace too, use means ; but sometimes God will work without instruments and without means, to shew that his grace is sufficient to do what he pleases, and that all outward means and instruments without it are vain and insignificant things. I will do what I will do, saith Grace, I will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy. Again,

II. For the honour of his own covenant ; for when souls are run so far from God beyond the common methods of recovery, so that afflictions will not restore them, then what is it can restore them but his covenant and his faithfulness to his own promises, and because he has given them into the hands of his own Son, therefore he will never suffer them to be plucked out of his hands. He remembers his covenant, he remembers his promises of old, which he sware to their fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, &c.

III. After many afflictions and chastisements have been tried, and souls are not restored to God, he doth it by his own grace then because he seeth they are not able to bear more afflictions without running into despair. They will be ready to plunge

themselves into eternity at uncertainties, they are upon the borders of destruction, and therefore I will put forth my sovereign love and will heal them.

IV. God doth this to encourage other backsliders not to despair utterly. It may be, there are many of us here that have been ready to sink into despair because of our sins, but find encouragement by the story of Peter in the Gospel. Thus the instance of his fall and his recovery, and that of David, have been methods whereby the divine Spirit has released souls that were sinking under the weight of despair. David himself cries out from the depth of distress, and the Lord heard him, and then he saith, let Israel hope in the Lord, for the Lord will have mercy. These are some of the reasons for which God now and then goes out of his ordinary way to reclaim transgressions : but remember, that this is not God's usual method; I would have this inculcated upon all our spirits. It may be where he recovers one sinner that runs on at this rate, there are many thousands hurry along to their eternal misery.

S E R M O N

S E R M O N IV.

ISAIAH lvii. 18.

I have seen his ways, and I will heal him, &c.

I Now proceed to make some little improvement of the discourses thus far. These inferences may be drawn from them :

I. How extensive and unsearchable are the riches of grace in the covenant. Grace, that is resolved to recover such stubborn backsliders. Large grace it was that procured the covenant, that promised the blessings of it, and that fulfilled all its articles, according to the several seasons of the church's necessities. How abundant must be the compassion of the father, that he should see our sinful ways, and yet heal us ! the wilfulness of the rebellion, and yet not stretch out his hands and smite us ! That he should see us in all the aggravations of our guilt, and yet not lift up his sword of justice, and take an ample vengeance on us ! Well may we cry out, O Lord our Lord, how glorious is thy grace throughout all the earth ! how vast thy magnificence of compassion above all our abounding iniquities ! Again, how abundant is the

love of our Redeemer ! He died for his enemies ; yea, he continues still with a heart and tongue pleading for us ; for us, who have sinned against himself and his Father ! How glorious and efficacious are all his perfections ! What great righteousness must that be that could make satisfaction for such guilt ! What strong compassion dwells in the heart of this physician, that he will apply his blood to those wounds that we have made after his once healing us. How great are his sanctifying influences ! A touch of his finger brought us to him at first, and recovered us after our backsliding. How long-suffering is he ; his love has been quenched by our many rebellions ; and we may well wonder that he should return to rekindle dying grace. Let every backslider that has been healed, let every preserved believer, and let every converted sinner in this assembly say, Honour and glory be to the love of God the Father, the compassion of our Saviour, and the kind influences of the Spirit, who heals all our sins.

II. We may here see how various and unconfined is our heavenly Father in his dealings with his backsliding children. Now he chastises gently ; if this be not sufficient, he grows wrath and hides his face, and withdraws his spirit from them, and uses keener darts ; but if all these are too little, then

then almighty grace takes the stubborn soul into his hands, and overlooking all the guilt of the unworthy prodigal, resolves that he shall be recovered by sovereign love. O the depth of the wisdom and contrivance of God for our good! How unsearchable are his ways, and his mercies, as well his judgments, past finding out.

III. How well is it for sinners, that have resisted many methods of grace, that there is such a word as this in the book of God. Such lines, as we said before, are not to be found in every page of scripture; that when God has tried so many methods of recovery on a sinner, and he has rejected them all, that then he should use his almighty grace. *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him.*

This he does, lest they should sink into despair, and run away from him into final apostacy. For when a child of God has rebelled against his Father, and has gotten his conscience a little hardened by a continuance in sin, God has repeated his strokes upon him, and he found his heart no softer. Then blessed be God for such a word as this is; there is mercy and love that can recover, when chastising providence would have not had this blessed effect.

IV. How very dishonourable to such grace is the sin of unbelief. Hast thou, O sinner, had the disease

disease of thy spirit arise so high as to make thee despond when there is so mighty, so all-sufficient a healing medicine. Although thou hast found a variety of methods unsuccessful, yet when God sees that one thing will not do he uses another; he takes the soul into his own hands, and touches it and heals it. Let us say with the leper, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, thou canst heal me.* And where there has been such faith, the soul has, as it were, heard the Lord say, *I will; be thou clean.* Besides, let those that have backslidden from God, after they have been brought near him, remember how far distant they were from him once, when they lay in a state of sin and nature, dark and dead, cold and negligent, and yet how eternal love has drawn them? How everlasting love has recovered them? He that saw our ways and healed us when we were making haste to destruction, and walking in the broad ways that lead to death; this God, when he beheld our backslidings, had grace enough to restore us.

V. How dangerous will it be to turn away from God when he begins to exercise this healing grace upon thy soul! Hast thou been long blinded and walked on in a maze of errors, doth he begin now to discover to thee the value of Christ and his salvation?

tion? Doth he begin to discover a sight of heaven to thee now, and wilt thou check these beginnings of recovery? Doth he now begin to touch thy tender part? Doth he begin to awaken thee to a sense of former backslidings, and wilt thou still turn away? O dread the thoughts of being sealed over for ever to judicial hardness; thy face has been turned away from the God of Sion, and he begins to turn thee to himself again, and wilt thou indulge sin so as to cause thy soul to turn backward; what canst thou expect but that God should give thee up for ever?

VI. How strong are the obligations of those that have been thus recovered, and thus healed, to stand afar off from all sin? To avoid all seasons and all places of infection? Those that have had such mortal diseases cured; those that have found a remedy at the point of death. God does not work such instances of mercy every day. If ever the Lord has turned thy soul from great backslidings, with cords of such love as this is, how strongly should this lie upon thy soul to keep thee close to God? How jealous should thy soul be of every temptation? The sin of Solomon is aggravated beyond the sins of many in scripture, because he sinned after the Lord had twice manifested himself to him. And it will lie with an heavy burden
on

on thy conscience, O backslider, if thou departest from thy God, after he has discovered himself unto thee twice with enlightening love and healing grace.

I proceed to speak to the latter words of this text; *I will lead him also.* Let us here consider the parts of this blessing, the nature of it, and the methods which God uses to lead his people by.

The nature of this blessing has these three things in it:

I. Leading implies the presence of him that leads, with him that is led.

II. Leading is a gentle method of conduct.

III. It implies safety in our whole course.

I. Leading implies the presence of him that leads, with him that is led. When one person leads another in a path, there is a mutual friendship. See now the extent of this blessing. God reconciles a backsliding soul to himself, and will be present with him that he may not run away. I will heal him and will lead him, saith the Lord. I will take him by the hand, and afford my constant gracious presence with him, and he shall not run so far back from me again as he has done. Such great backsliding that draw near to apostacy, are not frequently repeated in the life of a christian.

II. Leading

II. Leading implies a gentle method of conduct. God has been before trying by severe providences to bring the soul back to himself, that is, the shepherd takes his rod into his hand, and endeavours to drive his wandering sheep into the fold again: well, but it will not do; and, saith God, I will take him by the hand and will gently lead him. Our Saviour is represented as a gentle shepherd, that leads his flock. Isa. xl. 11. Those that are feeble, those that are burthened and oppressed with many sorrows and temptations, they shall be led gently that they may not faint and fall away. Such gentle methods as a compassionate mother uses towards her children, such does our Lord Jesus Christ use towards his feeble saints, and especially when he has found that severe methods will not do.

III. Divine leading implies safely to the end also. He will conduct us safely through all the dangers that attend in journeying, and will bring us to his upper house. So he led Israel of old in the wilderness through many dangers, he made his own people to go forth out of Egypt like sheep, he guided them in the wilderness like a flock, he brought them along safely to the land which he had promised, to the borders of Canaan. Thus he will lead us safely till he brings us to a promised

mised inheritance, the heavenly Canaan, his own bosom.

Secondly, The parts of which this blessing consists, are such as these :

I. Leading implies direction in dark and doubtful ways. The children of God shall find their Father's leadings when duty seems to be obscure. God will direct them which is the way in which they should walk. Our enemies are many : sin within, and the world without us ; but God will defend us. Again, when snares stand thick, then God will lead us in the right way, it may be free from snares and temptations ; they shall hear a voice, saying, this is the way, walk in it.

II. This implies assistance in walking through difficult paths, and wherein are many oppositions. Thus you have God described, aiding his people, in Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12. It was he made them as it were to leap over mountains that stood in their way ; nothing could hinder their progress to Canaan.

Again, this implies support under weariness and faintings, when we undertake to lead people we expect that sometimes they should lean upon us : thus God is the rock and support of all that trust in him ; when they are ready to fall he will uphold them by his right-hand ; they shall walk and not faint, they shall run and not be weary, because
their

their God is with them: he takes care to supply them with every thing that is necessary till they arrive to the heavenly country: when, through difficulties in their way, they are ready to be overwhelmed, he will remove them all, and support them. Who is this that comes out of the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? The church of Christ leans upon him whom she has chosen for her beloved, all the while she is in this world till she comes to her father's house.

Thirdly, The methods God leads his people by are these : His word, his providence, and his spirit.

I. He leads by his word; this is his map, or his sea-chart, wherein he has discovered all the by-roads, all rocks and shelves, that his people may escape them.

II. By his providence also he leads us. Lead us not into temptation, that is, let thy providence be such through our lives that we may not be exposed to temptations. Sometimes divine providence encompasses us all around with strong temptations, as when we are brought into evil company, when we cannot serve God but by the loss of our estates, &c. David oftentimes found temptations surrounding him. For God then to conduct us, or to lead us by his providence, is to guide us through this world in such a way and course of

life as is least exposed to temptations and motives to sin.

III. Again, God leads us by his spirit. By this he teaches us to understand his providences and his word. Suppose a map or globe of the world were set before a child, he would not well know which is the way from one place to another, or understand the meaning of those lines and articles in it, which is the way from one port to another, what rocks are to be avoided, what shelves to be shunned, without some guide to teach and instruct him. Thus it is with us ; God has given us his word as a map and chart to direct our passage through this world, but we are as ignorant as children of it, unless he guide us by his spirit. This then is the design of the spirit of God to teach us, and guide us to heaven by explaining his word and providence. Sometimes, indeed, he leads us contrary to the seeming indignations of his providence, but never to his word.

If I would make any inferences, they should be these two :

I. What need is there of divine leading in our way to heaven, when there are so many snares, so many difficulties, to allure or affright us from our God, and his worship, and his ways ?

II. How full shall our joy be in heaven, when we are brought home in safety ; when we shall look
back

back upon this great wilderness wherein there were so many fiery flying serpents, wherein there were so many temptations, so many difficulties, so many enemies that opposed our journey. It may be perhaps one of our delightfulest contemplations to look upon the various methods of Divine grace to bring us to heaven.

First, What is implied in this comfort? *Answer*. It implies all that inward peace and joy that belongs to religion in this life, and that flows from the hope of blessedness in the life to come. I will restore to him, saith the Lord, a sense of my love, and shed it abroad in his soul, and compose all the powers of his nature into divine peace. I will say unto him, he is my beloved, as well as sweetly constrain him to love me. I will give him a sight of the grace that is in my heart for him, and a sight of the grace that I have wrought in his heart also, which has been long buried under the rubbish of sin and loads of guilt. I will uncover the face of his soul and shew him the characters of his adoption, the gravings of the finger of my own spirit, which has been filled up with the dust of this world, so that he could not read them. I will brighten his evidence of salvation; I will give him peace and joy also in his outward circumstances, and remove the rod wherewith I smote him; I will forgive all his iniquities, and heal all his diseases; he shall walk

with me in the ways of holiness and comfort; and he shall rejoice in the hopes of everlasting glory.

Secondly, What is meant by restoring comfort to him?

Ans. He shall renew his taste of the pleasures of religion again, which he has lost in the days of his backsliding and guilt: the comforts that he once fed upon in the days of his first conversion, he shall feed upon again with new relish and sweet delight, even the joys that arise from a sense of recovering grace. He shall know afresh what it is sensibly to receive a word of pardon from my promises, and the voice of consolation from my witnessing spirit, and taste those pleasures that he has a long time been a stranger to. I will restore to him the light of my countenance, who might have hid my face from him for ever. I might have bid him go fetch comforts from the creature which he has idolized, from the riches or pleasures that he has pursued. Go and fetch comfort from the passions that you have indulged, and all the follies and humours that you have been gratifying while you wandered away from me. I might say to him, go to the gods that you have served; your self-will, your pride, and vanity of mind, and all the lusts of your heart: but I will give him peace liberally and not upbraid: I myself will undertake to be
his

his comforter. Come to me, O thou backslider, saith the Lord, and receive my peace: thou hast grieved my spirit, the comforter, but he shall return unto thee with all his consolations.

Thirdly; What signify the mourners of Israel?

Ans. I. The backsliders themselves, that have been somewhat uneasy under all their wanderings from God, and now begin to mourn that they have departed from him; the soul could not find satisfaction and rest amongst all its idols, and yet it hardly knew the way to return to its God, the only satisfying good, till he began to heal and lead him: and when this healing work begins, then the soul begins to mourn sensibly for its old backslidings, and comes under that promise; Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Ans. II. The mourners of Israel may imply fellow christians, that sought the Lord for him, and that mourned for his wanderings. All his friends, that have been afflicted for his sins and departure from God, shall rejoice in his return, and in his consolations. The ministers of the gospel, that have mourned over wandering souls, shall delight to see them returning to their great shepherd. The watchmen shall rejoice, with the voice together they shall sing, when they shall see the people belonging to their charge, face to face, in the presence of the Lord. When the Lord shall bring

the children of Sion back again to their father's course, and his ordinances, from their captivity to sin and Satan. And our thoughts may from hence take a rise and meditate upon the overflowing joys of that day, when all the backsliders of Israel shall be brought home ; when all the mourners shall be comforted ; when they shall return to Sion ; when they shall arise to heaven with everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away.

SERMON

S E R M O N V.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 9.

As dying, and behold, we live.

LET us read the account which St. Paul gives of himself, his dangers and his sufferings, in 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. and we shall see, the words in my text abundantly exemplified and confirmed; in stripes above measure, in labours more abundant, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep: in journeying often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. The apostle is in all these sufferings, and yet he is saved; in all these deaths, and yet he lives: he speaks with a sort of mark of admiration, *Behold, we live.* He tells us, the apostles carried about the treasure of the glorious gospel in earthen vessels, 2 Cor. iv. 7. One would wonder that his earthen

vessel had not been broken to pieces long before ; this makes him resemble his life to the life and death of Christ, for the life of Christ was full of sufferings and sorrows, 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11. Or the words, *Life of Christ*, may be construed in another sense, viz. Notwithstanding all these deaths, yet I live, to shew that Christ is alive, and hath power in heaven to preserve such an earthen vessel from being broken ; and that partly according to the promise of Christ, *Because I live, ye shall live also* : John xiv. 19.

Now, as it was with this great apostle in a most eminent degree, so it is in some measure with every christian. We appear *as dying creatures* in many senses, and yet *behold we live*. Give me leave to employ your meditations this day, in paraphrasing these words of the apostle, in a sense somewhat larger than is precisely designed in my text, and accommodating or applying them to our own case.

First. We may be considered *as dying creatures*, with regard to the natural life of the body.

Secondly. With regard to the courage of our hearts, and our hopes, and our comforts in this life.

Thirdly. With regard to our spiritual estate, or the heavenly life which is begun in us, which
consists

consists in holiness and peace. And though we are poor dying creatures in all these respects, yet to the glory of the grace of God, *Behold, we live.* And, as the apostle expresses it, *Acts xxvi. 22. Having obtained help of God, we continue to this day.* Under each of these general heads, I shall briefly represent our dying circumstances, and then put you in mind of the methods which providence and grace make use of to continue us in life.

First. We are dying creatures with regard to the natural life of this body. What continual need of fresh renewal of life, lest hunger and thirst should destroy our nature and dissolve our frame? What seeds of weakness and disease lurk within us, and often break out and bring down our tabernacle near to the grave? And when we think them gone, their symptoms return again with new terror. What perpetual danger are we exposed to among the accidents of this life? How many hundreds come to their end by such accidents? Besides the wearing out of this mortal nature, by labours of the mind or body, or growing years and advancing age. What multitudes have gone down to the dust since we have been born, and yet we continue upon the earth, who have nothing in us that can promise, or that can secure length of life to us beyond those who are dead. We are thus

furrounded with deaths within and without, and yet we live.

I. By constant supplies of food and raiment, and the necessities of life, which we have out of the stores of divine bounty. It is God that feeds and clothes us in this wilderness, and gives us our daily bread, though not in so wonderful and visible a manner as he did to the Israelites. It is he blesteth our daily food to make it nourishing to our natures, and effectual to preserve life. Deut. viii. 3. Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. We are sometimes filled with anxieties; what shall I eat, &c. but God hath hitherto provided, and we live. He feeds the lamp of life with fresh oil, which would otherwise expire in darkness.

II. By his kind providence preserving us from outward dangers. Psal. cxxi. 2, 3, 4. He carried the Israelites through the wilderness; their feet swelled not, nor did the heat consume them, or serpents or plagues utterly destroy them. Psal. xxxiv. 20. He keepeth all our bones, not one of them is broken. He sends his angels for our guard, and gives them charge over us to keep us in all our ways. Psal. xci. 11, 12. To bear us up in their hands, lest we dash our feet against the stones.
Psal.

Pfal. lxviii. 20. He that is our God, is the God of salvation; often we have been on the very edge of the grave, and behold, we live; to the Lord our God belong all our escapes from death.

III. By merciful recoveries from sickness, by healing our diseases which were ready to destroy us. Psal. ciii. 3, 4. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. Psal. xxx. 2, 3. O Lord, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought my soul from the grave, thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. We have been on the very brink of death, *and behold, we live.*

Let us recount the wonders of his mercy towards us; let our hearts be filled with gratitude, and our lips with his high praises; blessed be the name of the Lord our God, our feeder, our preserver, our healer. Amen. Hallelujah. Praise ye the Lord.

Secondly. We are often dying with regard to the courage of our hearts, our hope and comforts in this life, *and yet behold, we live.*

When

When outward troubles furround us, how do our hearts sink within us, and our life is ready to fail us. We give all over for lost, and our hopes are ready to expire.

How do we faint under every fresh affliction, every new burden presses us down almost to the grave. One loss comes upon the back of another, poverty stares us in the face, all meagre and in tattered raiment, at the apprehension of its frightful appearance we are ready to drop into the dust. How shall I provide for myself and my household?

Our paths are beset with thorns and snares, our distress is great, our friends forsake us utterly, and perplexing circumstances attend us, overwhelming trials and overwhelming fears; our enemies rise up against us, ever watchful and ever malicious. As David flying like a partridge to the mountains. Psal. cxlii. Refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul: I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Or reproach hath broken my heart, and my soul is poured out in the dust. Psal. lxix. 20. My heart seems dying within me.

Notwithstanding all these distresses, our hearts are not broken: notwithstanding all these deaths, yet *behold, we live*. God, even our God, hath preserved us.

I. By

I. By some unforeseen and unexpected turns of Providence, changing the scene of things, in a short time scattering the clouds, and giving us a fair and shining sky. Amos v. 8. Sometimes he makes the day dark as the night, and then he turns the shadow of death into the morning, and by the paths of the grave leads us to life and joy. There are strange revolutions of the right hand of the most high; he changes enemies into friends, and makes a curse work into a blessing. Deut. xxiii. 5. He brings the blind by a way that they know not, and leads them in paths that they have not known: he makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. Isai. xlii. 16. He sends provision by the mouth of a raven, morning and night, to feed the prophet; he multiplies and encreases the cruise of oil into a river, and the barrel of meal doth not waste: he finds out ways for unexpected supplies. They that live upon Providence shall know the ways of the Lord; but they who will not live but upon their own stores, have no taste, no knowledge of these sort of blessings; this loving kindness of the Lord. Psal. cvii. and the last verse.

II. By consolations and supports, derived to us from the word of God, under our huge troubles and threatening distresses.

Sometimes

Sometimes a promise suited to our case ; these are springs of divine comfort, hidden cordials for a fainting Christian ; though the men of the world feel nothing in them reviving. *Isaiah xliii. 2.* I am thy God, when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Sometimes a precept, a solemn reproof silences all our fears. *Fear not, saith the Lord, I am with thee.*

Sometimes the representations of the ancient dealings of God with his people, *Psa. lxxvii. 11, 12, &c.* I will remember the works of the Lord ; surely I will remember thy wonders of old, I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. *Psa. xxii. 4, 5.* Our fathers trusted in thee ; and thou didst deliver them ; they cried unto thee, and were delivered : they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

Art not thou he who hath delivered Abraham, and Jacob, and Joseph, and the Israelites, who hast saved David from his hourly perils, and brought him to the kingdom.

III. By calling to mind the mercies and deliverances that we ourselves have received from the hands of God in the hours of distress. *Psa. lxxi. 5.* Thou hast been my trust from my youth, I am as a wonder unto many ; but thou art my refuge.

Ver.

Ver. 20. Thou which has shewn me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and bring me up from the depths of the earth. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver us: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. Thou hast been my helper; in the shadow of thy wings will I trust.

IV. By the comfortable words of friends and acquaintance relating their own experiences of the goodness of God, and encouraging and supporting us under trouble. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4. Blessed be the God of all comfort, which comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. 1 Theff. v. 14. Comfort one another with these words, Chap. iv. ult. Prov. xxvii. 9. Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel. Telling them I was in these circumstances, and the Lord hath delivered me, &c. and these were my supports, and these my methods to obtain peace and relief.

V. By teaching us to live more upon invisible things, and making all present troubles seem very light, and by raising our hearts to things eternal and heavenly. By daily converse with God and heavenly things,

things, and living above the world. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. Thus we have been dying, and behold, we live. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Amen. Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord!

Thirdly. We seem to be dying in regard to our spiritual life, the life of holiness and peace begun in us.

When we feel our corruptions working and rising at every turn, we are afraid we shall be overpowered by them, and quite led captive to sin and death.

Pride, sinful appetite, intemperance, furious anger, resentment, uneasiness, and repining at Providence, &c.

When we feel the temptations of the world surrounding us and pressing hard upon us, either the soft enticements of the world, and the allurements of flesh, luxury, and vanity, or the oppositions and frowns, and reproaches, and terrors of the world, between one and the other we are ready to cry out, We shall sink and die! and especially if God delays to hear our prayers and hide himself from us, and

if the tempter, the accuser, be suffered to assault and buffet us, we find inroads made upon our holiness and our peace. *Always dying, yet behold, we live!*

I. By a fresh sight of the glory of Christ, and the all-sufficiency of the covenant of Grace; when we ourselves are never so guilty, there is righteousness in him sufficient: when we are unholy, there is sanctifying grace in him: when weak and wavering, there is life, and strength, and stability in him: when diffident and suspicious of our own hearts, there is faintness and safety in the covenant of Grace: when we lose our sight of Christ and the covenant of Grace, we die; but we gain a renewed view of the glorious Gospel, and the Son of God, and then we live. Jesus is our life and our salvation.

II. By mourning for past miscarriages, and awaking and stirring up our souls to new vigour and watchfulness. In this life, the children of God, walking through the wilderness, often fall and rise again; fall by sins of infirmity, and rise by repentance.

By shaking off sloth, renouncing our idols, going forth again in new strength, by chiding our hearts out of their desponding frames. Psa. xl. ult. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall

shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.

III. By renewed exercises of faith on Christ and his Gospel. As we begin the spiritual life, so we must continue in it and so recover it. We are crucified with Christ, and yet we live; and, as the apostle saith, Not I, but Christ liveth in me. Gal. ii. 20. I live by the faith of the Son of God.

IV. By some suitable word of God, brought to the heart, and imprest upon it by the Holy Spirit, who is a sanctifier and comforter. Gal. vi. 10. Be not weary in well-doing, for in due time you shall reap if you faint not. The Spirit often makes use of his own word to quicken our dying graces, to revive our dying comforts, and to save our souls from spiritual death.

V. By the special ordinances of the New Testament, I mean particularly the Lord's Supper; in all the parts of it, it is fitted to renew the dying life of a saint. Are we ready to die under the sense of guilt? Here is pardoning mercy. Are we sinking under sorrows? Here is the wine of the kingdom for our cordial. Are we fainting and feeble? Here is spiritual food to nourish and support us. Are we oppressed under temptations and huge conflicts? Here is the spirit of God to enable us to overcome them; here is the blood of the Lamb to cast down
the

the tempter. Are we drawing near to death and the grave, with sorrows or sickness? Here is a dying Saviour set before you, who now lives and reigns in glory, as our pattern and our forerunner. Though he was once a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; who was put to death through weakness, yet, behold, he lives by the power of God raising him from the dead.

I. In what a feeble state are Christians in this world, both with regard to their temporal life and peace, and yet how well secured by the grace of Christ and the Gospel: Ever dying, and behold they live. The bush burning is not consumed: God is the bush.

II. How glorious a grace is faith to support dying Christians through so many distresses and difficulties, both in flesh and spirit? The Christian's life is upheld by faith; this revives us from all our dying circumstances, and under all our sinkings this supports us.

III. What foundation is laid for the courage and hope of Christians in their lowest state in this life: when they consider this hath been the case of their predecessors in all ages; *dying, and behold they live!* The church of God itself, how often hath it been near destruction? but the arm and love of God hath preserved it: every particular saint hath

had his dangers and his fears, and, behold, they are brought to salvation !

IV. What a blessed state are we travelling to, where we shall be possessed of life without any danger or fear of dying ; where we shall be vested with immortality and life in perfection : where we shall live a life of strength, without weakness ; of health, without sickness ; of safety, without danger ; of peace, without disturbance ; of holiness, without sin or temptation ; and unknown joy, without fear or sorrow, for ever. Amen.



F I N I S.